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Memoir of the Rev. James MacGregor, D. D.,

MEMOIR

OF THE

REV. JAMES MACGREGOR, D. D.,

MISSIONARY OF THE GENERAL ASSOCIATE SYNOD OF SCOTLAND TO PICTOU, NOVA SCOTIA;

WITH

NOTICES OF THE COLONIZATION OF THE LOWER PROVINCES OF BRITISH AMERICA, AND OF THE SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF THE EARLY SETTLERS.

BY HIS GRANDSON,

THE REV. GEORGE PATTERSON,

PASTOR OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION, AT GREENHILL, PICTOU, NOVA SCOTIA.

"In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the Heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." 2 Cor. xi. 26-28.

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1859.

PREFACE.

THE following work has been undertaken principally from the combined force of the following reasons—first, that such a work was due to the subject of it, and secondly, there appeared to the author no likelihood of its being attempted by another, to which he may add that the time for doing justice to the subject was rapidly passing, and would soon be gone for ever. From the apostolic labours and sufferings of the deceased, the loveliness of his Christian character, and the universal esteem in which he was held, not only in Nova Scotia, but wherever the tale of his early privations and his arduous toils was told, together with the many marked dealings of Providence with him throughout his career, it was universally felt at the time of his decease, that such a memoir was called for; and when it was known that he had left an autobiography, detailing the most important events in his life, public expectation was excited. This autobiography was placed in the hands of the late Dr. MacCulloch, who from his long and intimate friendship for the deceased, as well as his eminent literary gifts, was so well qualified to do justice to the subject. The number of his engagements prevented him from fulfilling a duty, which would have been as grateful to his own mind, as we might have expected it to have been worthy of the deceased. Time has since passed, and there seems no other person likely to do the work, and the author has felt that it were better that he should do it, however imperfectly, than that it should not be done at all.

These reasons were strongly enforced by the additional consideration, that the time is going by, when the work could be done in any thing like a satisfactory manner. Most if not all of Dr. MacGregor's cotemporaries are gone. There are but one or two persons living, who knew him previous to his arrival in this country, and these are now in their dotage. Those who had reached years of maturity when he arrived in Nova Scotia, are all gone to the land of deep forgetfulness, and in a few years there will be none living able to speak from personal knowledge of his early toils. The written documents, which throw light on his history are also perishing, and many are irrecoverably gone. "There is a time for every thing," but the time for doing justice to the memory of Dr. MacGregor is nearly past. But in a short time it will have gone for ever, and what is now difficult will be then impossible, and what can now only be done imperfectly can then not be done at all. And during the collecting of the materials for the following memoir, the writer has had many warnings to remember the divine admonition, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Several individuals, who might have afforded information have passed away, while he was contemplating an effort to obtain their reminiscences, or he has visited others, only to find their memory a blank, and their intellect quenched by disease or infirmity.

Impelled by these considerations, the author has devoted, he cannot say his leisure time, for leisure time he has not known for ten years, but such intervals as he could snatch from engrossing avocations, to gathering and arranging the materials of the present volume. He is aware that it will disappoint many, and none can be more sensible of its deficiencies than himself. But it is only fair that he state the difficulties in his way. In the first place he cannot speak of the subject of the memoir from personal knowledge. Two scenes exhaust his personal recollections. The one is the remembrance, deeply engraven upon the mind of childhood, of a tall dark-complexioned man entering the room being the signal for a rush to him

of us children, and of the thrill of happiness passing through our frames as we sat upon his knee. The other is of being lifted up, a boy of scarce six years of age, in a room full of disconsolate mourners, to gaze upon his lifeless clay. Then all his cotemporaries are gone. Of the companions of his boyhood none remain, so that we are indebted mostly to tradition for the few incidents, that have been gleaned regarding his early life. Those who were associated with him in the ministry in his early years, all rest from their labours. Those who were of age when he came to this country, are all gone to the land of deep forgetfulness, leaving the author to gather his information regarding those most interesting years of his life, from those who were but children at the time, or from tradition, and he has learned enough in attempting to get at facts handed down only for a single generation, to see how valueless is such a dependence for religious truth. But besides these things, he has been disappointed in his efforts to obtain copies of his letters. For years Dr. MacGregor kept up a correspondence not only with the General Associate Synod, but with a number of private friends in Britain and America. His communications were highly valued by those who had the privilege of receiving them, and from traditionary information, we learn that they contained deeply interesting accounts of his early labours. But the parties who received them are all gone, and in some instances their children after them, and we have made enquiry after their papers only to learn that they had been all ruthlessly committed to the flames, or had otherwise perished.

Besides, the deceased kept no journal or diary. A few memoranda were found of events written after they occurred, but they want that vividness imparted to a scene, by its being described under the feelings and impressions of the moment. Biographers in most cases derive their most interesting materials from such a source, and in this case the want can never be supplied. His life exhibited so many remarkable incidents, and his intercourse with individuals so many instances of inte-

resting spiritual dealings with men, that if full records had been taken of them at the time, we believe that they would have formed a biography unsurpassed in the English language. As it is, the author has received accounts of such incidents from the children or the children's children of those connected with them, yet in so imperfect a manner that he could make no use of them. It is true that the deceased in his later years, at the urgent solicitations of some of his friends, who had often listened with delight to his narratives of what the Lord had done for him, commenced to record his reminiscences; but this was done after the lapse of forty years, when the impression of these scenes must have become dim, and the review of only seven or eight years was accomplished, when he was struck with paralysis, which impaired all his faculties, and especially his memory, so as to leave the remaining portion of his narrative meagre and imperfect. Even of this, a large portion has been lost, together with many of his other papers.

Under these circumstances, the author has done the best that he could, and what he has done, has involved an amount of labour of which but few are aware. He has travelled long distances to see persons likely to afford him information, in some instances only to find with them "the sun and the moon and the stars darkened." He has conducted a correspondence with persons not only in Nova Scotia and the other British American colonies, but in Britain and the United States, which even in these days of cheap postage involved considerable outlay. He has strained his eyes and exhausted his energies in poring over dingy MSS., in a very cramped system of short-hand, never intended to be read by any but the original writer. He has spent considerable labour in illustrating the subjects incidentally connected with his life. He has consulted authorities very difficult to procure in this country, and has even obtained works from abroad.

To him, however, it has been a labour of love, and could he see his object realized, of setting before the present generation a just view of the labours and character of the departed, he

would feel himself amply rewarded. To those still living who were familiar with Dr. MacGregor, he is aware how imperfect his work will appear. Yet it would be taking an undue liberty with the public to appear before them, did he not believe that he had so far succeeded in sketching Dr. MacGregor's life as to afford some idea of "what manner of man he was." It would be affectation in the author to express any other conviction, than that, with all the disappointments he has met with and all the deficiencies in his performance, his labour has not been altogether in vain. He rejoices to believe, that he has been enabled to some extent to present before the rising generation of the church, such a record of his labours as will give them a better view of them than they have hitherto had, and such as is fitted by the divine blessing to be profitable both among his brethren in the ministry and in the private circles of the church. Nor is he without hopes, that what he has done may be the means of making his name more widely known abroad.

Some of the facts and incidents recorded in the following pages may appear trifling. The purpose for which these have been introduced, has been to illustrate the character of the subject of this memoir, or to exhibit the state of the country at the time. And if they are examined in this light, the author believes that the most trifling will appear to serve that purpose.

It will be seen that much of the information is traditionary. He is aware of the uncertainty of such authority. But the necessity of resorting to it was in his case unavoidable. He has, however, been at pains to verify facts, both by comparing information from different quarters, and by securing where practicable the testimony of two or three witnesses, and though it would be too much to expect, that his work would be absolutely free from errors, yet he believes, that though farther information might more fully illustrate the subject treated of, it would not materially alter his statement of facts.

Some of the remarks made in explanation of subjects as they occur may be deemed unnecessary. In reference to these

the author would remark, that his work is written for two classes of readers, viz., Scottish and American. The account of the rise of the Secession may be unnecessary to the former, but it is one of those portions which the latter would be least willing to spare. On the other hand the explanations regarding customs in America, though unnecessary there, will we believe be valued by those in Scotland who feel sufficient interest in the subject to peruse his work.

He would also embrace the opportunity of acknowledging the aids received in various ways from different individuals. These are so numerous that he cannot particularize them. But he cannot forbear mentioning two, viz., Mr. John Douglass, Middle River, Pictou, and Mrs. Hugh Stevenson, of London, C. W. The former was for many years on the most intimate terms with Dr. MacGregor, and has now for the long period of fifty-five years filled the office of the eldership. From him he has received a large portion of his information regarding the early condition of Pictou, and many of the incidents recorded in the first part of the memoir. The latter is a niece of Dr. MacGregor, and from her recollection of conversations with her mother, Dr. MacGregor's younger sister, he has derived the greater part of the information regarding his father and his own early life recorded in the first two chapters.

It is not unlikely that the present volume will elicit fuller information on some portions of his life which the author has been able to treat very imperfectly. Should this be the case, and the present work meet with a favourable reception, any additional facts that he may be able to collect, will be embodied in a companion volume to the present, to be entitled "Memorials of our Fathers," in which he designs to exhibit the life and labours of those brethren in the ministry, who were associated with Dr. MacGregor in his labours. For such a work the author has been already collecting materials, and should Providence spare his life and bless his undertaking, it will be issued in the course of two or three years.

The work will be found to contain information which may be

regarded as not having any direct reference to Dr. MacGregor. This has been inserted with no desire to increase the size of the volume, but by the advice of friends, who have strongly urged that nothing should be withheld, which would help to exhibit the state of the country at the time.

In conclusion, the writer would only say in the words of an Apocryphal writer, "If I have done well, and as is fitting the story, it is that which I desired, but if slenderly and meanly, it is that which I could attain to."

GEORGE PATTERSON.

GREEN HILL, Pictou, Nova Scotia,
July 1859.

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MEMOIR OF THE

REV. JAMES MACGREGOR.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

The glory of children is their fathers.—Prov. xvii. 6.

THE plans of Providence exhibit one closely connected chain of events, stretching from the beginning of time till the end thereof; and each link in the chain is inseparably united with every other, whether in the all absorbing past or the opening future. Each event, as it occurs, has been the result of a combination of causes acting, it may be, through all the past periods of human existence, and will exert its influence upon the future till "the last syllable of recorded time." Each individual of the mighty multitude who throng our globe, is, both in the circumstances in which he is placed, the characteristics by which he is distinguished, and the part which he acts, the product of a series of causes and events, stretching away back into the past until history and tradition go out in darkness; and he produces a circle in the ocean of time which is ever widening and will continue to extend till the last trumpet shall arrest the course of sublunary things. Humble as may be the sphere which he occupies, unimportant as may seem the events that befall him, his life is yet a stage in a history whose roots reach back to the time when man received his origin from his Creator, his influence during his own time ramifies in all directions, and forming part of the mass of life, ever hastening onward, he aids in swelling the vast tide of human progression toward

the ultimate goal of humanity on earth; yea, even strikes a chord whose vibrations reach to other spheres and continue through eternal ages.

But in the case of the vast majority of mankind, the connection of their lives, either with what precedes or what follows, can be traced only for a few generations. A few can point to a line of ancestry extending far back into the remote past; a few have their names linked with events, which on the page of history stand out in brilliant illumination from the dark ground of oblivion; and a few act a part upon the theatre of life, by which they obtain a celebrity which bears their names down to a distant posterity. But of the overwhelming mass of mankind history preserves no record. However strong their desire to connect their names with what is eminent in the past, with events which are famous in story, or with men whom we vainly denominate the deathless great, the desire is vain; their very genealogy can be traced only for a few ages, and their early ancestral history is a blank. Alike vain is their desire for future fame. All remembrance of the vast majority of mankind is destined to pass away, save from that mind which fully knows all beings and all events, which searches all motives, which weighs all actions, which traces all influences, and awards all retribution. Even local tradition preserves any information concerning them only for a brief period. In a few generations their very names will be forgotten on earth,—their monuments will crumble to dust, and nothing mark the spot where their ashes repose, so that all efforts to preserve the recollection of them seems like a vain struggle with the decree of the Almighty.

Yet "the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance." Whatever be their ancestral history, the light of their good deeds lingers around the scene of their labours long after they have lain down to their last repose. "Their works do follow them." Many of them have done deeds far surpassing in real greatness those of the warrior on the tented field; and, it may be in some humble sphere, where the voice of worldly applause reached them not, they have achieved results more important

than the victories of Trafalgar or Waterloo. And when actions are judged according to their intrinsic merit, and honours awarded accordingly, the heads of such men will be encircled by a glory compared with which the earthly honours of the mightiest conquerors shall have "no glory by reason of the glory that excelleth." Such men will not be forgotten. Their "record is on high." One there is, who, we are assured, "is not unrighteous to forget their work of faith and labour of love, which they have showed toward his name." And among men, "future generations will arise up and call them blessed." Justice to their memory, as well as the profit of those who succeed, requires that their deeds should be recorded, their virtues honoured, and their names embalmed, in the grateful recollections of posterity. This is a duty enforced by divine authority. "Remember the days of old, and consider the years of many generations; ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee." The things "which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength and his wonderful works that he hath done." Such is the justification of the present imperfect and too long delayed effort to do justice to the memory of one, of whose labours the Lower Provinces of British America have reason to retain a grateful recollection.

In tracing his antecedents, we at once acknowledge that we can point to no long pedigree of illustrious ancestors. But if the Scripture declaration be regarded, that "the memory of the *just* is blessed," his parentage was well worthy of a record. He might use regarding it the language of the Poet,

> "My boast is not that I deduce my birth,
> From loins enthroned, or princes of the earth,
> But higher far my proud pretensions rise,
> The son of parents passed into the skies."

Nor can he be connected historically with any of those great events which in the past have decided the destinies of nations;

but we can record incidents, which to him who will "observe the work of the Lord and consider the operations of his hand," mark the wonder-working hand of Divine Providence, which connects all events past, present, and future, the smallest as well as the greatest in one scheme; and by the manner in which they combine to work out his purposes manifests his glory, so as to attract to himself the admiration, the esteem, the reverence, and the love of intelligent beings.

Let us then direct the minds of our readers to a period a few years previous to the last rebellion in Scotland, and briefly refer to the social condition of the Northern parts of that country previous to that important event. The outbreak of 1715 had been speedily quelled, but the spirit of rebellion, so far from being extinct, was only gathering strength for the more terrible outbreak of 1745. The majority of the clans were zealous in their adherence to the House of Stuart, and schemes being then on foot for the restoration of the exiled family to the British throne, they were not disposed to render very implicit subjection to the ruling powers. The power of the Highland chiefs still remained unbroken, the ancient feudal, or perhaps more properly, patriarchal institutions were in full vigour, the social changes which were introduced on the suppression of the rebellion, were still unheard of, and chief and vassal alike retained their attachment to their peculiar customs and their ancient superstitions. In particular war was deemed an employment highly honourable, while honest labour was despised, and it was viewed as no disgrace, but on the contrary as an exploit of signal merit, to sweep off the cattle of a neighbouring clan or of Lowlanders, who refused to acknowledge their superiority. In these circumstances life and property were insecure, not only in the Highlands, but in the districts bordering upon them.

Among the Highland raids, or plundering expeditions, characteristic of that period, was one, made as near as we can ascertain between the years 1730 and 1735, upon a hamlet in the Northern part of Perthshire, close by Loch Earne and bordering

on the Macgregor's country. The dwellings of the inhabitants were burned, and their cattle driven away. We have no particular account of the event. It of course receives no mention in history. Before the scenes which the general historian has to describe, it fades into infinitesimal insignificance. Even local tradition scarce preserves any particulars of the affair, either of the actors in it, the events connected with it, or its immediate consequences. But in one respect we know that the most important results followed. It was the means of leading one young man, then about twenty years of age, to leave his native district, and to proceed to the Lowlands, for the purpose of obtaining employment there, and upon this simple fact, the whole of our subsequent history depends. The individual who came down some one hundred and twenty years ago, like so many more of his Highland countrymen before and since, for the purpose of improving his worldly condition, belonged to the celebrated clan Gregor, but then bore the name of James Drummond, his family having adopted that name in consequence of the outlawry of that clan, and their being forbidden to use their own name. This was the father of the subject of our Memoir, and his visit at that time was the means in the arrangements of Divine Providence of determining the character of his whole future life, and produced results which eternity alone can disclose.

We believe it is not too much to say, that at that time there was throughout a large portion of the Highlands little of religion but the name. In some places the change from Popery to Protestantism had been accomplished merely by the order of their Lairds, while except in some favoured districts the mass of the people had but little acquaintance with the glorious doctrines of the Reformation. Even some years later, it was commonly said that "Sabbath didna come aboon the pass of Killiecrankie." Of the prevalent ignorance and ungodliness James's native parish had its full share. Up till the time of his leaving for the South, he had, so far as we can learn, little or no knowledge of the doctrines of the gospel. His motives in going south appear to have been entirely of a worldly nature,

and he applied himself to learn the trade of a weaver in Alloa. But Providence which "leads the blind by a way which they know not, and conducts them in paths which they have not known," was compassing his path to bring him to the enjoyment of blessings he yet knew not of. He came to the Lowlands seeking worldly good, but Providence designed to make his visit the means of securing to him that wisdom, whose price is above rubies, illustrating the divine saying, "I was found of them that sought me not."

We must however here advert to the ecclesiastical state of Scotland at this period. That spiritual deadness into which many of the churches of the Reformation had sunk at the beginning of the eighteenth century was severely felt in that country, and was in a large measure produced or at least greatly aggravated by the measures adopted for the settlement of the Church of Scotland after the Revolution of 1688. That settlement while it restored the Presbyterian form of Church Government so dear to the people of Scotland, and delivered the persecuted from the severe sufferings to which they had been subjected, yet entailed many evils upon the Church. The admission to parishes on easy terms of the late Episcopal incumbents, men whom Bishop Burnet, himself an Episcopalian, describes as "the worst preachers he ever heard, ignorant to a reproach, and many of them openly vicious, a disgrace to their orders, and indeed the dregs and refuse of the Northern parts," paved the way for the introduction of many errors in doctrine and practice. The law of patronage also facilitated the introduction of a corrupt and time serving ministry, so that, at the time of which we speak, they had become the ruling party in the Church. The Evangelical party had continued after the Revolution to exercise considerable influence, but corruption gained strength. The generation of ministers who had upheld the testimony of the Church in the trying times of the martyrs had now passed away, and a generation of another spirit ruled the counsels of the Church, whose measures were characterized by utter unfaithfulness to the doctrines of the gospel, as well

as disregard of the rights and liberties of the Christian people. The most dangerous errors had been promulgated by one of its professors, and by others occupying prominent positions; yet such was the temper of the majority, that they were allowed to escape altogether or with very slight censure. And not only so but the General Assembly had condemned as "unsound" and "detestable," a proposition adopted by one of the Presbyteries as a means of testing the qualifications of applicants for the ministry, which is of the essence of the gospel,* and in the celebrated Marrow controversy which immediately followed, stamped with their disapprobation a work which was distinguished by its exhibition of an unfettered gospel, and censured at their bar some of the best men in the Church for their faithful advocacy of its principles. Under the law of patronage, ministers the most objectionable were intruded into parishes in opposition to the wishes of the great majority of the people, and even of Presbyteries. At one meeting of Assembly no less than twelve petitions and appeals were presented against objectionable settlements, yet in every case they were persisted in even when the introduction into the Church could be accomplished only by military force.

Many excellent and faithful men had protested against these proceedings, but galled by their faithful testimonies the prevailing party determined to prevent or suppress them, and enacted that no reasons of dissent against their proceedings should be recorded. Two representations, one signed by forty-two ministers and the other by 1700 people were refused to be heard, and a protest signed by fifteen ministers was not permitted to be recorded. The only method left to those who mourned over these corruptions was to protest against them in their public ministrations, and an attempt to suppress these in a particular instance led to

* The following is the proposition inserted in the minutes of the Presbytery of Auchterarder, for which they were treated with indignant severity: "That it is not sound and orthodox to teach that we must forsake sin *in order to* our coming to Christ and instating us in covenant with God."

the SECESSION, and gave birth to the United Presbyterian Church.

At the meeting of the Synod of Perth and Stirling, in October, 1732, the Rev. Ebenezer Erskine, one of the ministers of Stirling, and retiring moderator, in preaching the opening sermon, which he did from Psal. cxviii. 22, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head-stone of the corner," testified with great plainness of speech against the course pursued by the courts of the church.

Mr. Erskine had long stood forth the consistent friend, both of the doctrines of the gospel and the freedom of the church. In the controversies of the previous twenty years he had held a prominent place among those who were struggling against the defections of the majority. But his present measure brought matters to a crisis. The Synod resolved, that for the statements and language of his sermon he should be rebuked at their bar, and admonished to behave orderly in future. On an appeal to the General Assembly, that court approved of the sentence of the Synod, and appointed him to be admonished and rebuked at their bar. Against this decision, Mr. E., together with the Rev. Alexander Moncrieff of Abernethy, the Rev. William Wilson of Perth, and the Rev. James Fisher of Kinclaven, tendered a paper containing their solemn protest, and claiming the liberty of preaching the same doctrines, and of testifying against the same, or like defections of the church, upon all proper occasions. The indignation of the Assembly was aroused by the faithful language of their protest, and without allowing the protesters a hearing before the court, it ordered them to appear before the Commission in August, and to retract, and express sorrow for what they had done, on pain of being suspended from the exercise of the ministry in the first instance, and of being deposed should they still continue refractory. On their refusal to retract or express sorrow, the Commission of Assembly did in August, 1733, and in a way which set at defiance even the forms of justice, suspend the "four brethren," from the exercise of the ministerial function, and all the parts

thereof. To this sentence they refused to submit, declaring it null and void. In November following, the Commission dissolved the pastoral relation between them and their congregations, declaring them no longer ministers of the Church of Scotland. The "four brethren" then handed in a protest, in which, after describing the "continued course of defection" of "the prevailing party," they declared themselves bound in conscience to make a SECESSION from them. This step they followed up on the 5th December, 1733, by forming themselves into a Presbytery, called the Associate Presbytery.

They continued for some time to occupy the same pulpits, and their preaching excited greater attention than before. Throughout the length and breadth of Scotland, the proceedings of which we have given a summary were regarded with deep interest. By the most pious portion of the community these men were looked upon as the friends of evangelical truth and the representatives of popular rights, and from the treatment they received were regarded with the admiration and sympathy due to sufferers in a righteous cause. In the parishes of the seceding ministers the interest showed itself in rather tumultuous forms, when the attempt was made to intimate the sentence of the Commission in their respective churches. But far beyond their parishes the interest was widening and deepening. Either from zeal for religion or from sympathy, multitudes were to be found leaving their respective parishes, and travelling great distances to attend the ministration of the seceding ministers, and within five years after the secession, the Presbytery had in one twelvemonth no less than 70 applications for preaching.

We have referred to these events, not only because some acquaintance with them is necessary to understand the ecclesiastical position and portions of the history of the subject of our memoir, but especially because they were the events which under God determined the character of his father, and in this way made *him* what he was. We have seen the father leaving his native parish for the Lowlands, ignorant of the doctrines of

the gospel. But that Providence, "in whose hands are our times," and who ordereth even the fall of a sparrow, brought him south at the very time that these events were exciting public interest, and placed him in circumstances where his attention could not fail to be directed to them. In his wise guidance he was led to a place of sojourn, only a few miles distant from Stirling, the scene of Ebenezer Erskine's ministrations, and to a master who was a cordial friend to the doctrines of the gospel. Among the crowds who flocked to hear Mr. Erskine in Stirling was this man, whose name has passed away, and he frequently took his Highland servant with him. These meetings were scenes of spiritual refreshing to multitudes of God's people, and many wanderers were gathered into the Redeemer's fold. "When God writes the people, he will count that this man and that man was born there." And among the number of those who at the final account will be reckoned as seals for the ministry of Ebenezer Erskine will be the name of James Drummond. We know not the exact circumstances in which the saving change took place, whether he was suddenly aroused from carelessness, or whether gradually enlightened; but we have it on undoubted authority, that it was by his preaching that he was brought to the knowledge of "the truth as it is in Jesus." He could not but be attracted by the preaching of Mr. Erskine, who is described by his contemporaries as of an appearance so majestic and noble as to command both respect and affection, while his preaching was characterized by tender and pathetic appeal, and clear exposition of gospel truth; but as he became spiritually enlightened, he was also drawn by the spirit which his hearers discovered. "One thing says Mr. Gilfillan, "that greatly contributed to his leaving the Established Church, was the dryness, as he called it, of the ministers he heard, and the carnal conversation of the people on the Sabbath day. When he sat in what was then called the servants' loft at Alloa, before public worship began, nothing was heard but the news of the country and the idle chit-chat of the past week; but when he went to Stirling or returned

from it, the savour of Christ's knowledge was diffused all around. They "took sweet counsel together as they went to the House of God in company." Under such preaching and in such society he gradually increased in the knowledge of the doctrines of the gospel, and also of the ecclesiastical state of Scotland; and his sympathies gradually gathered round the men, who had made so noble a stand for an unfettered gospel and for popular rights against the defections of the time. And "having first given himself to the Lord," he joined himself to those who were holding aloft the banner of truth and spiritual freedom.

But the event which particularly impressed his mind, and if it did not determine his choice in favour of the Secession, at least confirmed and established it, was the scene which occurred on the expulsion of E. Erskine from his church. For some years after the suspension of the "four brethren," they continued to occupy undisturbed the parish churches, in which they had formerly preached, although they had been joined by four others, and were engaged in measures for training a gospel ministry, and for supplying various parts of Scotland with gospel ordinances. At length however, in the year 1740, the whole eight were cast out of the Church, and deposed from the ministry, and the Assembly immediately gave intimation to the magistrates of their respective burghs, that they might be dispossessed of their pulpits. A description of the scene that occurred at Stirling we shall give in the words of a recent popular writer:

"At Stirling on the first Lord's day after Mr. Erskine's deposition, the church bells were forbidden to be rung, and the people, on assembling at the usual hour, found the doors of the church and church yard made fast to prevent their entrance. The exasperated multitude were about to proceed to violent measures to effect their entrance, but their venerable pastor having made his appearance, and expressed his disapprobation of all violent measures, succeeded in dissuading them from the attempt. Then in the presence of the immense multitude, whom the interesting occasion had brought together, he lifted

up his pulpit Bible, which according to the custom of the times, he had brought with him from his house, and with that majestic manner, which was so natural to him, and with awfully impressive solemnity of tone, protested as in the Divine presence, that he was now obeying the dictates of duty, and that not he, but his opposers, were responsible at the judgment seat of God for the scenes of that day. The words spread a thrill of deep emotion throughout the vast assembly—more especially as they looked on the gray hairs and majestic form of the venerable sufferer; but every thought of violence had given way to holier feelings, and quietly retiring to a convenient spot, they listened to the ministrations of the dauntless witness whom they now began to regard not only with the affection due to a pastor, but with something of the veneration claimed by a martyr.

"The place selected for the solemn service was such as to harmonize with the state of mind of the worshippers, and to provide the vast multitude with a fitting sanctuary. To this day the visitor to Stirling is guided to a verdant and elevated spot, that rises to the northward of that ancient seat of kings. Here with the frowning ramparts of the castle rising above him—rich and waving plains beneath, amid which the 'many linked' Forth seeks his majestic way, and begins his strange and mazy circles as if loath to leave so fair a scene, with far in the distance the noble Grampians raising their bold and rugged pinnacles into the clouds—did this father of the Secession gather together his scattered sheep, and rear, as it were, in visible form, the standard, which bore inscribed on it, 'Christ's crown' and 'His people's right.'

"The first portion of the 60th Psalm was given out by Mr. Erskine to be sung, and very appropriately opened the services of the day.

'O Lord thou hast rejected us
And scattered us abroad,
Thou justly hast displeased been,
Return to us, O God.

The earth to tremble thou hast made,
Therein didst breaches make,
Do thou thereof the breaches heal,
Because the land doth shake.'

"A short prayer followed; after which the venerable man read as his text those words of Matt. viii. 27, 'But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and sea obey him?' The sermon which followed was one which those who heard never could forget. The occasion, the scene, the subject, all tended to elevate both speaker and hearers into a higher region, and made holy eloquence sound like inspiration. It was a day of deep and varied emotions. Some were saddened to tears, when they thought of the precious minister whom the Church of Scotland had driven from her pale, in others joy in the truths which they had heard, swallowed up for the time all other feelings; while hoary headed men felt the recollections of youth suddenly revived, and those who had been active in the proceedings of that day seemed to their minds to have 'served themselves heirs to the iniquity and wickedness of some of their forefathers in that place, who stoned that eminent seer and faithful martyr, Mr. James Guthrie.'" *

Among the number of those who on that occasion hung upon the lips of the preacher, and whose feelings were strongly excited by the event, was James Drummond. He was a man of great tenderness of heart, and his natural feelings were deeply impressed, so that to the latest hour of his life he was accustomed to speak of it with emotion. He had by this time learned to value the truths for which Mr. Erskine had been expelled the Church, and henceforth he cast in his lot with the persecuted remnant. About that year, we are not informed whether before or after this scene, he applied for the privilege of communion with the Church, and was after due examination admitted by Mr. Erskine himself. From that time he acted

* Thomson's Early History of the Secession.

through life the part both of a consistent Christian and a firm Seceder.

Soon after this period he returned to his native parish and settled at what was then called Portmore, but where now stands the village of St. Fillans, just at the foot of Loch Earne in the parish of Comrie, and county of Perthshire. He had left home for the purpose of seeking the improvement of his worldly circumstances. He returned with a treasure more valuable than the gold of Ophir or the gems of Golconda. As the woman of Samaria went to tell to those of her own city of the Saviour she had found, he returned to his native parish to communicate to others the knowledge of that salvation, which he had received during his absence. And as "Andrew first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is being interpreted, the Christ, and he brought him to Jesus," and as Philip found his friend Nathaniel, so his first efforts were among his relatives and friends, to bring them to Jesus. And his efforts were not in vain. "When he returned to the Highlands," says Mr. Gilfillan, "he endeavoured to communicate the good news among his relations and neighbours, and his endeavours were not without some success. A few came forth to the help of the Lord, and a seed was sown which shall not be destroyed, we trust, for ages to come." Whether he was the first to introduce the Secession into the parish of Comrie, we are uncertain; but we know that he was among the first, and we are assured that he was the first in that quarter of the parish in which he resided. His brothers and friends through his influence became Seceders, which in many parts of Scotland at that time was synonymous with being serious Christians. His brothers were indeed pious men, and it is believed that they became so through his instrumentality.

From the origin of the Secession there had been in Comrie, as in many of the parishes in Scotland, a praying society, and out of this, as in many other instances, sprung the Secession Congregation of that place. The members were found travel-

ling long distances to obtain that bread of life, which was not dispensed at home, and with the prevalence of "moderatism" in most of the parishes of Scotland, their attention was naturally directed to the ministers of the Secession, among whom the gospel of the grace of God was proclaimed in all its fulness and freeness. One is mentioned as having frequently travelled all the way to Dunfermline to sit under the ministrations of Ralph Erskine, and James is traditionally reported, as having travelled on foot all the way to Muckhart, a distance of over forty miles, to enjoy the faithful preaching of the word. Shortly after his return, a petition was presented to the Secession Presbytery for a supply of preaching, which was granted, and among others, one of the Erskines, we believe Ralph, preached occasionally to them, while residing there for the benefit of his health. At first the prospects of the cause were good, several persons of influence having expressed themselves favourable to it. But these gradually fell off, and from various circumstances the effort did not succeed as was at first anticipated. A few however remained faithful, and amid every severity of cold and rain attended upon the services, which were held in the open air. In 1752 they leased ground and erected a small place of worship, but with the exception of a few months in the year 1760, they were until the year 1767 under the pastoral care of the Rev. Mr. Muckersie of Kinkell, and upon his ministrations James attended regularly, and always spoke of him in terms of the highest regard. "It was a gratifying sight," says Mr. Gilfillan, "to those who can enjoy such a spectacle, to see James and his wife going all the way from Loch Earne to Kinkell, about eighteen English miles, almost every Sabbath in summer, and they were commonly at the place of worship by nine o'clock in the morning. James used to wrap himself up in his Highland plaid, and going into the church in winter or to a small grove near it in summer, he slept two hours, that he might not after his long walk be overcome with drowsiness during the services, and then rose to hear the word, which he always did with great eagerness and seldom without tears." In the year 1767

the Rev. Mr. Barlas was ordained minister of Crieff and Comrie, preaching one fourth of his time at Comrie and three-fourths of his time at Crieff; and in his old age he had the pleasure of enjoying the services of a pastor in Comrie, the late Rev. Samuel Gilfillan, who was ordained there in 1791.

The following notice of his life and character are principally from Mr. Gilfillan's sketch. He was a person of great integrity of mind and primitive simplicity of manners. His name among some ministers of his acquaintance was Nathaniel. He was much given to the exercise of prayer. "The woods on the side of Loch Earne, if they could speak, would testify how often he wrestled with God for his church, and especially for this benighted part of the country." The late Dr. Jarment of London, visiting Comrie, requested a grand-daughter to take him to the house where James lived. She did so. Only two stones were left. He sat down on one of them, and gave expression to his thoughts in the remark, "If these stones could speak, how many prayers could they tell of, that had been put up within those walls by that good old man!"

He was remarkable for his reverence for the Sabbath. On that day he had family worship three times. On going and returning from church he was always engaged in religious conversation, and was disliked by many on that account. Not unfrequently it might be heard said, "Here comes that great Seceder, we canna get a word said." His warnings to the young also were faithful and affectionate. "Children," he would say, "attend the Kirk when ye're young. I found it easier to go to Kinkell when I was young, than I do now to go to Comrie."

He was however particularly distinguished by his earnest desire for the spreading of the gospel, and, though occupying an humble sphere, he showed it by his personal exertions for the conversion of those around him. Many a dark night did he travel round the country with practical books, in order to read them to those who were careless and ignorant, and leaving them with them that they might peruse them at their leisure.

The *Christian Magazine*, then the principal religious periodical circulated in the Secession Church, he read with great avidity, particularly what concerned the progress of Christ's kingdom. The tears rolled down his aged cheeks when he heard of the remarkable success, which attended the labours of the missionaries of the Secession in Orkney, and he lived long enough to hear that the Highlands of Scotland, about Moulin, had become the scene of the Redeemer's power. The revival of religion which took place in that part of the country under the late Dr. Stewart, Mr. Gilfillan was accustomed to represent as an answer to his prayers.

Reserving an account of the closing scenes of his life for another part of the work, we here merely notice his family. Shortly after his return from the Lowlands he married. His wife's name was Janet Dochart or McGregor. She was a native of Dunira, about half-way between Crieff and Comrie; now the seat of the mansion of Sir D. Dundas. She was a woman of decided piety, and also one of a turn of mind which fitted her to be a help-meet for him. He was a man of so gentle a spirit, and so interested in spiritual matters, as almost to regard his worldly interests with carelessness. While industrious and regular in his labours, he was so free from anxiety for the things of this life, that had he not had one with the spirit of a Martha, to look after the affairs of his household, his worldly concerns might have gone into confusion. But he found in her not only one that feared God, but a clever manager, of active habits and thrifty care, who "looked well to the ways of her household, and ate not the bread of idleness."

To them were born three sons and three daughters. The daughters were all married. Two of them died in Scotland, and the other in Canada. Two of them left families; some of their descendants still reside in their native parish, but the majority of them are either in Canada or the United States. They have generally been exemplary in their lives, and most of them of decided piety; some are filling stations of respectability and influence, and several even in humble life have been

distinguished by remarkable intelligence. Of the sons, two died in infancy, one from small-pox, the other from scalding, and the third was the subject of this memoir.*

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* In preparing this chapter, I have been indebted among other works to McKerrow's History of the Secession, Thomson's Early History of the Secession, as well as other works which treat of the Ecclesiastical History of Scotland in the last century; also to a notice of James McGregor in the Christian Magazine, Vol.; I. to a similar notice of him in Fraser's life of E. Erskine; to the memo r of the Rev. Sam. Gilfillan, by his son; and to conversations with a grand-daughter in London, C. W., and with several persons resident in the parish of Comrie.

CHAPTER II.

FROM HIS BIRTH TO HIS LICENSURE, 1759–1784.

"My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews." Acts xxvi. 4.

The Rev. James Macgregor was born at what was then a small hamlet called Portmore, just at the foot of Loch Earne, in the parish of Comrie, and county of Perthshire, North Britain, in December 1759.* The spot is now occupied by the village of St. Fillans, so called from a certain saint whose name tradition hands down as a resident of this neighbourhood, who in the days of his mortality filled the office of Prior of Pittenweem, and afterwards was the favourite saint of Robert Bruce, and a relic of whom was carried in a shrine by the Abbot of Inchaffray at the battle of Bannockburn. Here rising from a little rocky knoll, on which two indentations are pointed out as the marks of the knees of the saint at his devotions, is Saint Fillan's Spring, which was long believed to possess miraculous power over disease; and even yet it is viewed by the superstitious Highlanders as possessing saintly virtue.

"And magic virtues charmed St. Fillan's Spring." †

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* After his death a paper containing the following in his hand writing was found in one of his books.

"James Macgregor, D.D., Born Dec. 1759.
Came here, July 20, 1786.
Was here, 1830."

As he died on the 3rd of March of the year last mentioned, it must have been written within two months of his death, when he was calmly waiting the arrival of the last messenger.

† To this spring Sir Walter Scott refers in the first stanza of Marmion,

That district presents much fine scenery, being on the borders of the Highlands, and blending the grandeurs of the hill country, with the beauties of the Lowlands. The lake itself is a beautiful sheet of water, about seven miles long, gemmed by a solitary islet, and lying in placid loveliness in the midst of a ring of heathy mountains, while in the distance are seen the summits of the highest mountains of the Western Highlands. "There are few Scottish lakes more worthy of a visit than Loch Earne. Its shore throughout, and for at least half a mile inland, is clothed with thriving copse and brushwood, creating continual changes of the scenery, and a succession of the most picturesque and romantic views. Beyond these woods on every side hills and mountains arise, piercing the clouds with their lofty summits and adding grandeur and sublimity to the scene. Looking from either end of the lake, the view is peculiarly magnificent, the whole valley can be seen at once, with its enormous vista of mountains enclosing all around—the transparent lake which forms its glassy centre—and the beautiful fringing of wood with which the base of the mountains and the shores of the lake are adorned."*

From the foot of the loch eastward stretches a beautiful vale or strath, commonly called Strathearne, and sometimes denominated the Arcadia of Scotland, faced on both sides by extremely rugged hills. Issuing from the loch, near the village of St. Fillans, the river Earne finds its way through this valley, sometimes amidst forests of pine and larch, or in the shadow of perpendicular crags, or again stealing through a wide open moorland, with a few patches of corn diversifying the heath and the rocks. About six miles to the east, where two mountain

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"Harp of the North! that mouldering long hast hung
On the witch elm that shades Saint Fillan's spring."

And Wordsworth also refers to it when, speaking of the effects of the restoration of Popery to power in Britain, he says that it would

——"reconsecrate our wells
To good Saint Fillan and the fair Saint Anne."

* Gazetteer of Scotland.

streams, the Ruchill and the Lednock, after pouring down the rugged sides of the Grampians, in many a cascade and with eternal noise, unite with the river Earne, like soldiers, returning to the quiet valley of their youth, "when wild war's deadly blast was blawn," stands the village of Comrie. The district has of late attracted the attention of the scientific world by the earthquakes to which it is frequently subject.

We have alluded to the physical appearance of the country, that our readers may have some idea of the scenes amid which his early days were spent, and also because we believe it had its influence upon his character. Not only did it fondly dwell in his recollection afterward, but we believe that it tended to nurse the poetic fires within him,* and to cherish that love of nature particularly in her grander moods, which often amid his physical toil in our Western wilds kindled within him the warmest emotions of delight, as his eye rested upon the glories of some of our American landscapes. Perhaps also it tended to nurture that peculiar temperament which seems characteristic of dwellers among the mountains—that deep sense of the awful and sublime, that veneration for the mysterious and supernatural which in the uneducated gives birth to the fears and the wonders of superstition.

Throughout the length of the valley described, were at that time scattered a number of hamlets of various sizes occupied by a poor but industrious population, in general each family possessing a small house, and a few acres of land called a croft, from which they obtained a moderate subsistence. To this class belonged the parents of the subject of our memoir. This system has of late years been broken up throughout the Highlands by the proprietors forming their land into larger farms, a measure which has caused the scattering of the Highlanders over the wide world.

Of his birth or the circumstances of his childhood, we have no particulars, except one which has come down to us by tra-

* Caledonia stern and wild,
Fit nurse for a poetic child.

dition, viz., that at his baptism his father solemnly dedicated him to the work of the Lord, should it be his gracious will, in the ministry of his Son. As already mentioned, two sons had been already born in the family, who did not long survive. Whether this influenced the mind of his father, or whether the proceeding was merely the impulse of a pious heart, we know not; but it is delightful to contemplate such an exhibition of parental piety, and to behold his parents manifesting the spirit, if not using the language, of Hannah: "For this child I prayed, and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him. Therefore, also, I have lent him to the Lord. As long as he liveth, he shall be lent to the Lord." And looking at the subsequent career of the child, we cannot help remarking the goodness of a covenant-keeping God, and pointing out the encouragement it affords to pious parents to follow a similar course. The practice of parents training one or more of their children for the office of the holy ministry, so common among the Scottish peasantry, is one which God has been pleased greatly to bless. Doubtless there may have been in many instances a mingling of worldly ambition, and it is sad to see the useless and misspent sacrifices, that have sometimes been made to train young men for the ministry whom Providence never intended for the work. Yet when such sacrifices have proceeded from right motives—when they have been accompanied with faith and prayer, and particularly when they have been the result of a pious parental dedication, God has in numberless instances blessed them as the means of filling the ranks of the ministry with able and faithful labourers. "God has not left himself without witness." "His faithfulness to his household covenant, and to his New Testament Church, has been signally manifested in a long line of ministers parentally dedicated to him in this holy work. From Samuel and those that follow after, a great cloud of witnesses have testified of these things. It has always pleased God to propagate his church by means of a pious posterity. He has transmitted his gospel ministry by this means. The sanctity of the domestic relation, and the

power of parental influence and prayer, have been employed by him for so momentous a result as the recruiting of labourers for the harvest-field of the world. And by all the necessities of his church, and of perishing millions in all lands, he calls upon Christian parents to lay their sons at the foot of the altar, and to crave for them, as their high Christian birthright, the distinguished honour of serving him in the ministry of reconciliation."* Our own church exhibits another distinguished example of the same thing in Mr. Geddie, their first missionary to the New Hebrides, who was in infancy dedicated by parental piety to the service of the God of missions, and who has been honoured as the first to plant the gospel among a new and interesting family of the human race. Were the same spirit more generally prevalent in the church, we would not hear, as we now do from *every* Protestant communion on this continent, the cry, "The harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few."

Of his early days we know little, except that he bore the character of a lively and active, yet gentle boy, of very inquisitive disposition, and occasionally giving evidence of a quick temper. Those who knew him in after years, when he exhibited a Christian placidity of mind which scarcely any provocation could disturb, will scarcely credit this last statement; but when they remember the holy fire, unmixed with human passion, which at times burst forth from him, they may believe that such would have been his character before natural tempers had been so thoroughly subdued by divine grace. Yet in general he was mild, kind, and affectionate, and though possessing great animal spirits and forward in fun, was never given to wickedness. From the account we have given of his father, we need scarcely say that he enjoyed the inestimable privilege of pious parental training. The family exhibited, indeed, the excellence of Scottish piety, as delineated in the Cottar's Saturday Night, which might well lead the poet and the patriot alike to exclaim,

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* Jacobus's Address before the Synod of Pittsburgh, 1857.

"From scenes like these, old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her loved at home, revered abroad."

The society among whom his lot was cast was of a similar description. Mr. Gilfillan, when settled in the parish, a number of years later, indeed describes the inhabitants of the parish as "generally prejudiced against the Secession—the present and rising generations fatally sunk in security—bent on all sinful and vain diversions—averse to reading and enquiry—and angry when their duty is told them." The picture seems too darkly coloured. At all events it is not true of that section in which Dr. McGregor spent his early life. It is generally described as a quiet neighbourhood, with but a scanty population, and this generally of a pious and exemplary character. Under such influences his character received an impress of goodness from his earliest years. In the kind Providence of God he was never permitted to run the course of youthful folly, so frequent even among those, who have afterwards become eminent in the Church of Christ. Throughout his early life his conduct was characterized at least by morality and outward respect for religion.

How early he became decidedly pious, we know not. With that modesty, which prevented him saying much of himself, and that reserve on personal experience, so characteristic of Scottish piety, we have not heard of an instance in which he referred to the subject. But from his enquiring turn of mind, from the manner in which religion filled the mind of his father, and pervaded his whole household arrangements, he must have had his attention directed to the subject at a very early age; and from any information we have received, we are inclined to believe that he was one of those who are "sanctified from their mothers' womb,"—that the seeds of religious truth took root in his childish mind with the first impressions of a pious home, and the first instructions of his parents' lips. For this we have no decided evidence, but several circumstances induce us to regard it as highly probable.

His father had, by attention to his little farm as well as by

his trade as a weaver, and also, ("tell it not in Gath," in these temperance days,) by keeping a still, and manufacturing a little whiskey, provided the means of giving his son a classical education; and mindful probably of his early vow, at the age of eight years placed him at the grammar-school at Kinkell. Here his father paid his board, but he was not allowed to be idle, for the thrifty wife, with whom he lodged, imposed on his good nature by obliging him at night to reel four dozen knots of fine linen thread, which her two daughters and two servant girls had spun through the day.

From this period he was little at home except at vacations. He also attended for a time the grammar-school at Dumblane. Of this period of his life we know almost nothing. All his cotemporaries are gone, and we have not met with any who were acquainted with him at either of these places, but by those who were residing in his native place, he is described as having been quick to learn. The following incident however, which occurred while he was at Kinkell, is of interest. He and some other boys were in a boat on the river Earne, and some of them having given it rather a sudden swing, he was thrown into the water, and immediately sank to the bottom, where he appears to have been deprived of all energy, and remained under water seemingly in a state of unconsciousness. To all appearance his course seemed run, but God had destined him for other work. After lying for a few moments, the thought rushed through his mind, that he was a great fool to lie there and be drowned; and immediately putting forth all his energies, he reached the surface and was assisted into the boat by his companions.

From Dumblane he proceeded to Edinburgh to attend the University. Here he passed the usual curriculum of study. It is now impossible to obtain any account of him at that period of his life. But his habitual application to study would lead us to believe that he would be at least a diligent student, and from the strong mental powers which he undoubtedly possessed, and his extremely inquisitive disposition, as well as from the

evidence he gave afterwards of his attainments, we are safe in concluding, that if he were not a profound scholar, he had in all the branches of education made respectable progress. We have also in our possession translations made at this time from some of the Greek Classics, which afford farther evidence of the same thing.

While receiving his education, he was supported principally if not entirely by the industry of his parents. While residing in Edinburgh he lodged with a female friend of the family, who did his cooking for him, while from his father's farm there came meat, meal, butter, &c., besides articles of female handicraft provided by the thrifty care of his mother and sisters. In that household was exhibited the spectacle so characteristic of Scotland, where the industry of all was cheerfully employed, and sacrifices cheerfully endured, with the view of fitting a beloved son and brother (in this case an only one) for the work of the ministry,—all their toil and self-denial cheered by the hope of seeing him filling a station of respectability and usefulness, and their piety gratified with the prospect of his being the means of advancing the Redeemer's kingdom. In these labours and sacrifices, the mother, as was natural, was the most forward, sometimes almost exciting the jealousy of the sisters, who, as they saw the best ham, or the best of something else laid aside for "James," would sometimes say, "Ah, mother, if you get James provided for, you don't care for the rest of us."

We believe however that while attending college he partly supported himself by teaching. Sometime about the year 1776 (which must have been before he completed his college curriculum) he taught school at Glenlednock, about four miles north of Comrie. Here he had a large school, and was much esteemed as a teacher. An individual, living in 1856, who attended his school, and in whose father's house he lodged, describes him as having been an active, sprightly lad, full of life and activity, very sociable in the family, and so full of fun, as sometimes to elicit a reproof from the grave but pious old man with whom he lodged, in whom the vivacity of youth had long

since passed away. While teaching here he also employed himself in translating the book of Proverbs into Gaelic, probably for the purpose of improving himself in that language.

Before describing his Theological course of study, it will be necessary to give some account of ecclesiastical affairs in Scotland during the years preceding. In the preceding chapter we have given a brief narrative of the origin of the Secession. For some time its progress was rapid, so that in the year 1744, it became necessary to divide the Presbytery into three, under the inspection of a synod called the *Associate Synod*, which held its first meeting at Stirling in March 1745. At that time there were reported as in connection with the body, thirty settled congregations and thirteen vacancies in Scotland, while already the cause had made progress in Ireland. But already a dark cloud was lowering over the infant church. A vexatious dispute had been introduced into Synod respecting the religious clause of certain oaths, required to be taken by the burgesses in the cities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Perth. This clause ran in the following terms, "Here I protest before God and your Lordships, that I profess and allow with my heart the true religion presently professed within this realm, and authorized by the laws thereof; I shall abide thereat and defend the same to my life's end, renouncing the Roman religion called Papistry." By some this was held as implying an approval of the corruptions of the Church of Scotland, against which the Secession was testifying, and they therefore refused to take the oath; but others held that it only meant the true religion itself in opposition to Popery, and therefore were willing to take the oath, or at least regarded the point as one on which conscientious men might honestly differ, and which therefore might properly be made a matter of forbearance. The controversy increased in bitterness till in 1747, only fifteen years after the Secession, they split into two sections: those who condemned the taking of the oath being usually known as Antiburghers, and their Synod being entitled the *General Associate Synod*, and those who did not object to the taking of it, being com-

monly known as Burghers, and their Synod bearing the name of the Associate Synod.

This "breach," as it was long called, may be regarded as the one great blot upon the history of the Secession. Division under any circumstances must have been attended with many evils, but in this case these evils were greatly increased by the spirit in which the controversy was conducted, angry feelings were excited, the friendships of years were severed—and bitter recriminations were launched against each other,

> "Each spake words of high disdain
> And insult to his heart's best brother."

But while the "contention was so sharp," as to cause the parties, like Paul and Barnabas, to "depart asunder the one from the other," it is easy to perceive that much of their proceedings originated in a morbid conscientiousness, which feared the admission of the slightest blot upon the purity of their public profession. The discussions to which the question gave rise, were also the means of throwing light upon the important question of the power of the civil magistrate in religion, and led to clearer and more advanced views on the subject. Thus the way was prepared for that great controversy, which more extensively agitated Scotland many years after on a point involved in it, viz., that of Civil Establishments of religion, and the bulk of both branches were led to take their position as the strenuous advocates of the most entire freedom of the church from all dependence upon the civil power. And it is well known that out of the latter controversy, usually known as the Voluntary controversy, arose the far famed Non-intrusion controversy, which finally issued in the formation of the Free Church of Scotland. It is gratifying to observe that in other ways the division was overruled for good. Each body continued faithful to the doctrines of grace, and the liberties of Christ's people. Each watched over the other's purity, and as Paul and Barnabas on their separation went in different directions, and thus were the means of spreading the gospel more widely than

when united, so the separation of the Seceders was the means of their carrying the great principles for which both were contending, into a greater number of places than would have been done had they remained together. And perhaps it saved them from the persecutions of the ruling power. It has been handed down by tradition, that some of the leading parties connected with the ecclesiastical affairs of Scotland, intended to use their interest with the Government of the day to adopt measures for the suppression of the Secession. But that when they heard that they had split, they concluded that it was unnecessary, as they must soon be destroyed by their mutual strife.

We have furnished this account of the division in the Secession, as some acquaintance with it is necessary to understand the course afterward adopted by the subject of our memoir. For the benefit of those of our readers not acquainted with the Ecclesiastical history of Scotland in the period referred to, we may remark, that the course of the Established Church was worse instead of better than before. Had her leaders had "understanding of the times," they might, by timely concession, have at least checked the growth of the Secession, if not have extinguished it altogether. But the very opposite policy was adopted. The very divisions of the Secession encouraged them to persevere in their career of corruption and oppression. The most obnoxious presentees continued to be forced upon an indignant people—and Presbyteries and presentees in some instances could only reach the parish church under the protection of dragoons, and under the same care went through the monstrous mockery of committing to the patron's nominee, by prayer, the charge of the souls in the Parish. Individual members of Presbytery were not even allowed the liberty of absenting themselves from such unhallowed proceedings; and in some instances, where a minister refused to take part in such a prostitution of the ordinances of religion, he was summarily deposed for his so called contumacy. It was in this way that Thomas Gillespie, one of the most amiable and upright men of his time, was cast out of the church, and became the founder

of the *Presbytery*, which afterward became the *Synod of Relief*. The ruling party now aimed at the entire suppression of popular power in the church. Under Principal Robertson, who succeeded to the leadership of the Assembly about the year 1763, it was boldly proclaimed, and acted upon, that the call of the people was not necessary, and that the presentation of the patron was sufficient reason for the Presbytery taking steps toward his ordination. Of those in the church who after the rise of the Secession had opposed their efforts to patronage, some like Willison had passed away from the scene, others like Witherspoon sought in America a free field for their energies, while others had sought in one or other of the Dissenting bodies, that relief for their consciences, which they could not find in the Establishment. And at length "Moderatism" reigned undisturbed over its whole proceedings. Under this system a ministry preaching, to use the language of Dr. Chalmers, "a morality without godliness, a certain prettiness of sentiment, occasionally served up in tasteful and well turned periods, the ethics of philosophy or the academic chair rather than the ethics of the gospel"—a ministry that after subscribing a Calvinistic creed, taught openly Arminian, Pelagian, or Socinian errors—a ministry oftentimes not even moral in its deportment, filled the pulpits of the Established Church, and by its deadening influence, was destroying vital godliness among the people, so that were it not for the lights kindled in Dissenting temples, there is every likelihood that evangelical truth would have been quenched throughout the land.

Such was the state of the Church of Scotland during the youth and early manhood of the subject of our memoir, and as he watched public events with deep interest, we need not wonder that he was by examination, as well as by education, a thorough Seceder. But it is also necessary to remark that he was also educated a strict Antiburgher. At the division the Erskines took the Burgher view, while Moncrieff, then Professor of Theology, embraced the opposite sentiment. To this party the congregation to which Dr. Macgregor's father be-

longed, as well as most of the Seceders in that quarter, adhered, and it must be observed that this was by far the "straitest sect" of the two. In regard to intercourse with other bodies they took ground which would now scarcely be taken by any church in Christendom. They avowed the principle that there should be no communion without union. So far from allowing forbearance in matters of minor importance, they held the very making a distinction between essentials and non-essentials to be the very grossest latitudinarianism, and forbearance they regarded as a sinful concurrence with what is evil. Nay farther, they held that even hearing in the churches of those who did not unite with them in their protest against prevailing corruption, was a lowering of their testimony, and becoming partaker in the evil deeds, against which they had erected a standard. Following out these principles, they would have refused communion equally with one who swore the Burgess oath, as with one who denied the atonement, and would have brought under discipline any member of the church, who would have heard a sermon from a parish minister. Notwithstanding the obligation, under which Dr. MacGregor's father lay to Ebenezer Erskine, he was thoroughly trained a strict Antiburgher. Mr. Gilfillan *naively* remarks of him, "As James's temper was rather gentle and soft than bold and intrepid, and not fully understanding the terms of communion in the Secession, he almost yielded to the plausible but lax opinion of hearing a good sermon anywhere. But being at a sacrament at Orwell about that time, a young minister, his name he thought was Mr. Smyton, obviated that difficulty, and henceforward he was so fixed in his principles, that nothing could shake them till his dying day." In these strict principles his son was trained, and he at first avowed them until circumstances led him either to modify or abandon them altogether. It is necessary to refer to these things as the subject will come up in a subsequent part of the narrative.

After completing the usual college curriculum, he was admitted to the study of Theology, under the Rev. William Mon-

crieff, Alloa, who had succeeded his father, the Rev. Alexander Moncrieff of Abernethy, as Professor of Theology to the General Associate Synod. A writer, speaking of those excellent men who adorned the early history of the Secession, thus describes him: "One of the most amiable of those excellent men was Professor Moncrieff of Alloa. He was a person of very dignified presence, but of great kindness of heart. His deportment was in every respect becoming. He was admitted by all who knew him to be a man of great piety and worth. He was beloved by his pupils as a man, admired as one of the most engaging preachers of the day, and revered for his qualities and conduct as a Theological teacher. His prelections were distinguished by simplicity, clearness, and precision, both of style and sentiment. He excelled in removing the difficulties which met him in his course, and in briefly but satisfactorily refuting the arguments and reasonings of adversaries."

The Hall met at Alloa for two months in Autumn, and the term of study was five years. During the vacation the studies of candidates for the ministry were prosecuted under the care of Presbyteries, and sometimes young men were taken for a time to reside in the families of aged ministers for the purpose of receiving their aid in the work. We do not know the exact date of his attendance, but we have in our possession, notes of lectures by Professor Moncrieff in the year 1781. Neither know we any thing of him as a student. All who were in attendance at that time have long since finished their earthly course. The only memorials that remain are the notes of Professor Moncrieff's lectures just referred to, and some notes of sermons heard while in attendance at the Hall. The notes of the lectures are plainly written out, and give in short compass, yet in a very clear manner, the substance of the lectures. They show his orderly habits and his attention to his business as a student. The character of his mind would prepare us for this, and as a result he showed from the time of his arrival in this country, a thorough acquaintance with the Scriptures and with Theology. We know also that previous to his arrival in this coun-

try he had particularly attended to the study of Hebrew, and had acquired an intimate acquaintance with the language. This attainment was by no means common at that time in Scotland. It is mentioned in the life of Dr. Dick, that while residing with a parish minister just about this time, he surprised him by his being acquainted with that language, this being an accomplishment which few or none in the district but himself could boast. We have in our possession fragments of a common-place book of Dr. MacGregor, which show that he read the language critically.

Of his mental powers at this time the only specimens we possess are two discourses, the one marked "Edinburgh 1781" on James ii. 24, the other about the same period on Rom. iii. 28, an Exegesis on 1 John iii. 14, and an Essay on Baptism. These would pass as good, and we may say as superior, in any Theological Seminary.

Having mentioned an Essay on Baptism among the papers prepared when a student, we may here remark, that at an early period of his career, his mind was agitated with doubts on the questions at issue between Baptists and Pedobaptists. In the preface to the treatise published in the present volume among his remains, he remarks, "The author was brought up a Pedobaptist, but in consequence of reading the arguments on the Baptist side he hesitated." We are not certain as to the time at which this took place, but it is understood that it was previous to his arrival in this country. It is believed that for a time his mind was strongly inclined to the Baptist view of the question. It is therefore instructive to read his account of the manner in which his difficulties were removed. "He searched anew the New Testament as impartially as he could, and with a fear lest his early prejudice for infant Baptism might mislead him. Still however he hesitated, for there he could not see a clear foundation for either side. There he could not see a command for, or an example of, infant Baptism so plain as to satisfy him, nor could he find satisfactory evidence for or against immersion, but still he thought that all light on God's Baptism

should be expected from searching not heathen authors, but God's own word. Providence having led him to notice Paul's phrases, 'doctrines of Baptism,' in Heb. vi., and 'divers Baptisms,' as the words should be rendered in Heb. ix., he was and is persuaded that he found a clew to guide him into the truth. Paul sent him to Moses. To Moses he went, and among his Baptisms he found one, which, as he believes, the prophets foretell shall continue till the end of time. Building the instructions of the New Testament upon this foundation, he is satisfied that sprinkling of infants with clean water is an ordinance of God."

His views on the subject will be found in this treatise. It was however prepared long after, being one of the latest efforts of his pen. But it embodies the views which he held from the commencement of his ministry. The reader will perceive that they are entirely founded on Scripture, that he traces the ordinance, not to any Heathen practice or Jewish tradition, but to the appointment of God under the Old Testament, and finds the same institution modified under the New, and adapted to the nature of the more advanced dispensation. In presenting this view, he did not undervalue the arguments commonly used for Infant Baptism, but this was an important view which had been long overlooked. We have been pleased to observe, that in recent discussions this view is beginning to receive the prominence to which it is entitled, but as we believe that he derived his views entirely from the prayerful study of the word of God, we regard this treatise as affording evidence of how a plain mind engaging in seeking the knowledge of God's revealed will, with a simple desire to know the truth, and with earnest prayer for divine direction, will be guided into the truth. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." "The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way."

From this time his convictions on the subject became decided and continued unshaken to the end. He used to say that he was "*sure* that the Baptists were wrong." One said to him,

"The Baptists think that they are right." "Yes," he replied, "but there is a great difference between *thinking* and *being sure*." And he was accustomed afterwards to express himself in strong terms of gratitude to the God of truth in guiding him to the conclusions at which he had arrived. He however retained a warm feeling of kindness to the Baptists as a body, which he afterwards manifested in a practical manner on more than one occasion.

We cannot but remark how wisely ordered it was in Providence, that he should thus have been led to a thorough examination of the subject. A large proportion of the ministry of Scotland have not completely mastered the Baptist controversy. They are seldom called on to discuss it, and are therefore not always ready at once to encounter opponents. But in this country, where the Baptist system prevails, and its advocates are zealous and ready armed with the usual plausible but superficial arguments by which they defend their views, the minister is frequently called to defend God's household covenant with believers, and to contend against that superstition, which attaches so much efficacy to an outward rite, according to the quantity of water, and the mode of its application. Dr. MacGregor, during the course of his ministry, necessarily came frequently in contact with those who held these views, and we cannot but regard it as a wise arrangement of Divine Providence, that he should thus be so thoroughly prepared for the work. We may here remark, that his preaching on the subject was often most effective—that it confirmed believers in the doctrine—removed the doubts of enquirers, and stopped the mouths of gainsayers. A Wesleyan minister lately remarked, that "the only time he had ever heard him preach was on this subject, and his sermon he could never forget," and we shall hereafter accord proof of his success in quieting agitation on the subject.

We have thus anticipated what properly belongs to a subsequent portion of the history, and we therefore return to consider him as a student. During the vacations of his college

and Theological curriculum he was frequently about home. He is described as then being "a fine frank lad," full of fun and activity. The companions of his boyhood embraced such occasions to meet in his father's house, and he would keep them the whole evening in amusement. Those who knew him in his later days—who recollect the deep seriousness that pervaded his whole conversation—his objection to sinful levity or even excessive mirth, will scarcely credit this; but the evidence upon which we make the statement is undoubted; and those who peruse his writings, will sometimes detect in them an under current of mirth, which though repressed by the weight of what he felt resting upon him as a minister of Christ, occasionally came to the surface, and in the company of his familiar friends, particularly his brethren in the ministry, burst forth in a rich fountain of harmless merriment, and which gave in after life to a piety of the deepest and most earnest nature, an air of cheerfulness, which preserved it from any appearance of moroseness or gloom. He was possessed then of great bodily activity, and was a superior swimmer. An old man living in 1857, pointed out a tree well out in the lake to which he used to swim.

At the same period he is represented as remarkable for a most inquisitive disposition, "searching into every thing," as it was expressed to the writer. One curious example of this was mentioned at Comrie. On one of the neighbouring hills, was a stone, which either in its appearance or position seemed somewhat singular. Desirous of understanding its mysteries, he engaged some men with a bottle of whiskey to turn it over. They did so but found nothing under it. It was probably connected with some superstition, possibly with the idea of money being found under it. From the same inquisitive disposition he had made himself familiar with the superstitions of his countrymen and the legends of his native district. Of these he afterward wrote home an account, which is now not to be found. It may be mentioned that the neighbourhood, though not connected with the religious history of Scotland, has many

interesting historical associations. It was the scene of bloody conflicts between the Romans and the Caledonians, and it was at the foot of the hills already described, that the conquerors of the world were arrested in the career of conquest. The battle of Mons Grampius, it is generally believed, was fought a little to the east of Comrie, and some of the hills in its neighbourhood bear names, whose meaning in Gaelic commemorates the contests of that era. The district also has associations, which would be interesting to a Highlander, particularly when the spirit of clanship existed in considerable force. The immediate vicinity of his birth place, was the scene of many sanguinary conflicts between the Campbells and MacGregors; while eastward of Comrie, is the village *Fiantiach* or Fingal's house, and Cairn Comhol, in memory of Fingal's father, and also the supposed tomb of Ossian. It will be unnecessary to inform our readers that he was too true a Highlander ever for a moment to doubt the authenticity of Ossian's Poems.

During the course of his Theological studies he taught school at Morebattle, in the south of Scotland. A widow lady, living in 1856, daughter of the Rev. James Morrison of Norham, on the south side of the Tweed, a few miles below Berwick, and niece of the Rev. David Morrison of Morebattle, under whose ministry he was placed, recollects of his paying a visit of a few weeks to her father's family, in which he was much esteemed, as in all the families and by all the persons with whom he privately associated. He was then a tall, dark, fine looking man, of very cheerful disposition. He sang Gaelic songs to them, and wrote several poetical pieces in English, which her father and the family admired. She also states that by her father, as well as her uncle, and the other ministers of the neighbourhood, he was highly esteemed as a man of decided piety, excellent talents, and engaging disposition and manners.

He also taught for some time in Argyleshire with the view of improving himself in Gaelic. Though this was the vernacular language of his native district, yet the dialect spoken by the people there, was not considered very pure. From the state

of the Highlands at that time, with but a small proportion of its ministers who either knew or preached the gospel, and many of the inhabitants in a state of ignorance and superstition, but little in advance of what they were at the time of the Reformation, and the Secession having few Gaelic preachers and anxious to add to their number, he felt himself called in the Providence of God, as well as impelled by his affection for "his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh," to preach the gospel among his Highland countrymen. And in order that he might be "thoroughly furnished" for the work, he took a school in the Western Highlands, where he had opportunity of making himself master of the language, probably where some eminent Gaelic scholars resided. We may mention that, as the result of his attention to the subject, he became one of the most thorough Gaelic scholars of his day whether in Britain or America.

He did not however disdain humbler occupations. There is in the possession of his family a large map of Perthshire, which he purchased several years after he came to Nova Scotia, and he informed his family, that he had acted as chain bearer in the surveys, upon which it was made.

It may be mentioned here that he had somewhat of a philological taste; and having made himself an excellent Hebrew scholar, and at the same time studying his native tongue, not in a superficial manner, but in its scientific construction, he became convinced of the existence of certain radical affinities between these two languages. This was afterward brought before the public by Dr. Jamieson, in his learned work entitled Hermes Scythicus. In a letter to the Doctor, accompanying a copy of this book as a present, Dr. J. says, "It will remind you of our old lucubrations about the Hebrew and Gaelic." It has come down to us as a dim tradition that his investigations on this subject, previous to his coming to this country, were likely to have given him a name among the literati of his country, though from his great modesty, he never spoke of it himself.

His naturally inquisitive disposition and warm affection for

his Highland countrymen, also led him to enquire into the history and characteristics of the various Highland clans. Reference to these will be found in one of his Gaelic poems, to be referred to hereafter. The same feeling led him about this period to resume the patronymic of his ancestors. It is well known that the clan Gregor had been outlawed, and that it was for a time unlawful even to use the name. His father's family had in consequence for several generations borne the name of Drummond. But having evidence from written documents or authentic tradition, that they were genuine members of this celebrated clan, he took their name, though his relations generally continued to be known as Drummonds. Having referred to the warmth of his feelings as a Highlander, we may insert here a draft of a letter, though written after he was licensed, addressed to a clergyman in the north, of the name of MacGregor, which we have deciphered from his short hand MS.

Rev. Sir—Pardon the presumption of an unknown young clergyman, who troubles you for once with his correspondence. The chief reason for my writing to you is my joy for having found a minister of my own clan, for I am a MacGregor, and I hear that you are of the same clan. I never knew any minister of my own clan, but Mr. J., to whose kindness I am much obliged, until in June last, being in the north country, I heard of you. I was north at N——,* and on my way back, I found that the landlord at A. was a MacGregor, on which account I called for him, and had a little conversation with him, and he told me particularly concerning you. I rejoiced as soon as I heard it. I was in haste, being obliged to be in Crieff against Sabbath, and on that account did not call upon you. Yet notwithstanding I am now sorry that I did it not, for I found a MacGregor in G——, who is acquainted with your character at least, and recommended your acquaintance to me, and blamed me for not calling. I cannot help this now, but if I come to the north again, I shall probably see you. The only reparation that I can make at present, is to trouble you with these few lines, by means of an acquaintance that is passing the road.

I am truly glad to find a MacGregor of your character, for though our clan were treated worse than they deserved at the hands of men, yet I believe they never were, any more than the rest of the clans, very religious. It is good that there are now religious persons amongst them, especially that there are some whose office it is to preach Christ's gospel, and

* Probably Nigg.

to declare to sinners, the gift of God, eternal life. Let us rejoice that the grace of God is free, free to the chief of sinners, and let us labour to declare (?) the glory of God and do good to the souls of sinners. I shall think myself honoured if you please to make a return to this and direct it, J. D. McG., &c.

To make the most of the scanty materials in our possession for the illustration of this portion of his life, we may give two extracts from letters which serve to throw a little light upon his character and history previous to his arrival in Nova Scotia. The Rev. James Robertson, of Kilmarnock, in a letter dated June 1788, says, "My wife presents her most affectionate respects to you, minding the time when you burnt the candle and beat the coals to read, when you should have been sleeping." And Mr. David Wallace, writing from Paisley, says, "I have no doubt that after your long absence from this country, you will not recollect my name, but you may perhaps remember that when in Paisley you frequently visited the mother-in-law of my father, William Wallace, who as she had but little English, took much pleasure in your conversation in the Gaelic language, and when I also (being then about five years of age) had the pleasure of sitting on your knee, which was to me at that time sublime happiness. The sentiments of regard impressed upon the hearts of my parents, on account of your kindness to them, and my grandmother mentioned above, and which local distance and length of time cannot obliterate, are the incentives to my now (at their desire) writing you."

CHAPTER III.

FROM HIS LICENSURE TILL HIS ARRIVAL IN NOVA SCOTIA, 1784–1786.

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations,—and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

HAVING completed the usual course of Theological study and performed the usual exercises prescribed as trials, he was duly licensed to preach the gospel, we cannot exactly ascertain at what date, but it must have been about the year 1784. From memorandums on his sermons it appears that while a probationer he preached at the following places, Comrie, Crieff, Kilmaurs, Hamilton, Brechin, Paisley, Dunse, Peebles, Dundee, Cupar, Arbroath, Auchtermuchty, Kilmarnock, Morebattle, Alyth, Alloa. Of the character of his preaching at this time we cannot now get any account, but we cannot be far wrong in supposing that it was similar to what it was when he arrived in Nova Scotia, viz., that it was acceptable, but by no means of the eminent character by which it was afterward distinguished. A Mr. James Hay, writing in 1811, says, "I have never forgotten the excellent discourse which you preached at Alloa, which I admired very much at the time, and I have met with little since that was not contained in your argument." And the Rev. Alexander Allan, of Cupar-angus, says, "Your memory is still dear to some good people here, and you have a place in their prayers." And Messrs. Buchanan and Pagan, who had been employed as agents of the people of Pictou, say in a letter to their constituents, "It will be needless for us to expatiate upon that gentleman's character as a minister; we shall only

say that this has been made to appear in such a strong point of view, we have not the least doubt of his giving entire satisfaction to your congregation."

During the whole course of his preparation for the work of the ministry, and also while engaged as a probationer, it was believed both by himself and the Synod, that the sphere in which he was called to labour, was the Highlands of Scotland. But the Secession had made but little progress in that part of the island, and they had few congregations there. The most interesting and most important was at Chapel Hill, in the parish of Nigg, Rosshire. This congregation had originated in the violent settlement of a minister obnoxious to the whole parish. In consequence of the universal opposition to him, the Presbytery were unwilling to proceed with his ordination, but awed by the authority of the General Assembly, who significantly referred them to the fate of Gillespie, who about four years before had been deposed from the ministry for refusing to join in such an act, four members of Presbytery proceeded to the church for the purpose. They found it empty, and were about to proceed with the mockery of committing the care of the souls of the parish to the obnoxious presentee, when an aged and venerable man, usually known as Donald Roy (*Anglice* Red Donald) whose name has been made widely known by the writings of one of his descendants, the lamented Hugh Miller, stood up and in solemn tones, announced to them, that "if they settled that man to the *walls* of the church, the blood of the parish of Nigg would be required at their hands." The members of Presbytery awe struck, gave up the work for that day; but under the fear of ecclesiastical authority at head quarters, they accomplished it on a subsequent occasion. The whole population however refused to enter the Parish Church, and after vainly endeavouring to obtain relief within the Established Church, they at length joined the Secession. For some time they had been under the ministry of the Rev. Patrick Buchanan, but, he being advanced in years, efforts were about being made to obtain the subject of our memoir as his col-

league and successor. The people of Comrie also, who had hitherto formed a part of the pastoral charge of the Rev. Jas. Barlas, of Crieff, but who had always looked forward to having a minister of their own, were making an effort to secure his services. We believe, however, that he looked upon Nigg as the probable scene of his future labours, when those events transpired which caused his removal to Nova Scotia.

In the fall of 1784 the people of Pictou had sent to Scotland a petition for a minister. It was entrusted to Messrs. John Pagan and John Buchanan, two respectable inhabitants of Greenock. Mr. Pagan was one of the members of the Philadelphia company by which Pictou was first settled, and the owner of the ship Hector, which brought to that place the first immigrants from Scotland. Of Mr. Buchanan we know nothing. The duty intrusted to them they seemed to have discharged faithfully. They were at liberty to present the petition to any Presbytery that they deemed most likely to comply with it. They held various consultations with ministers of different Presbyterian bodies, and had their attention directed to more than one who was thought likely to suit, but at length they made proposals to him. From records still existing it appears, that he was highly recommended to them, and that some of the ministers of the body to which he belonged considered it his duty to accept the proposal. Among his shorthand MS. we have found the following draft of a reply to a letter submitting the matter to his consideration:

"I received yours with Mr. P's and the petition. The petition breathes the spirit of the gospel and discovers no small acquaintance with its doctrines. It describes so feelingly the case of the people of Pictou, that I think some person or other is clearly called upon to go to their assistance, but I am not so clear if I be the person. I do not wish to raise captious objections against it from a desire to stay at home, nor, had I a regular call to go thither, should I wish to disobey it. It is very plain that I cannot answer any petition at my own hand, but by the order of the Synod. Therefore the Synod must be in the first place petitioned, and if they approve of it, I should probably obey. This sets aside at once what Mr. Pagan says about sailing in the beginning of March. I have already received appointments from the Synod till the beginning of March. And

though that term were out, they have power to give new appointments. I do not blame Mr. P. for wishing the petition to be answered so soon, for perhaps he cannot be acquainted with the constitution of the Synod. All that I mean is to show him the impossibility of answering it so soon. But when Messrs. R. M. and you earnestly wish my compliance with this providential call, I hope you mean in an orderly way, viz., by its first coming before the Synod. At the same time it is doubtful, if Messrs. Buchanan and Pagan can present it to the Synod, without first consulting their constituents, and getting their approbation. From the petition itself, it appears, that it was never designed to be presented to the Associate Synod. Perhaps the petitioners do not know whether there be any Associate Synod. It seems to me that the petition was designed to be presented to some of the Presbyteries in the Highlands, where the probationers understood both Gaelic and English. Now I greatly suspect that it would be irregular to present the petition to the Associate Synod, beside the intention of the petitioners. That expression, "also to strengthen the hands of the few ministers of the Presbyterian denomination already there," is certainly improper in any petition to be presented to our Synod; though all things considered, we cannot expect it to be otherwise. If the expression means, as is wholly probable, a strengthening of the hands of the Presbyterian ministers there, in the way of keeping (?) church communion with them, it is surely beyond the power of the Synod to answer it. The Synod is as bound to protect me as I am to be subject to them, and therefore they cannot throw me away beyond their own connection. Again, if the Synod should send me away, and require of me not to join in communion with the Presbyterian ministers there, might not the people justly say, that their petition was not answered and on that account refuse to receive me? I know nothing of the Presbyterian ministers there, but is there any reason to hope that they are all sound, and especially that they are all friends of a covenanted Reformation? If we are to judge of them from the Presbyteries of the Established Church here, may we not conclude that there is only one here and there that is sound in the faith? And if any of them be Arians and corrupt, and I join with them, how is it possible for me to escape the dangerous infection? I know that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Mr. P. wishes to get one who preaches the doctrines of the Westminster Confession, as worthy of a place. And I heartily wish that whoever is chosen may in this respect be wholly to his mind. I believe the people want such a one, and he, upon your recommendation, takes me to be such a one. Some such there may be there already, and he may wonder that I refuse to join with them. But I flatter myself that Mr. P. knows that many worthy ministers of the Church of Scotland preach these very doctrines, and yet are obliged to contradict them in their practice, by giving the right hand of fellowship to false brethren, and by sitting in judgment with them. He knows that this is a very disagreeable situation. I wish he could come one step farther, and see the (utter) unlawfulness of it, especially after a remedy is provided, as

I hope is done in the Secession. Then he would see the reasonableness of my shunning such a situation."

The above is only the first draft, and therefore in language and composition is not so correct as the copy would be. But we have inserted it as an interesting exhibition, and the only one we possess of his sentiments at that time. It will be seen that it indicates his readiness to go wherever duty might call him,—that he held himself at the disposal of the church, and was willing to submit to the decisions of its councils, without any sentimental weakness about leaving kindred and country. At the same time there appear scruples which in the present day would be regarded as needless, but which will be readily understood by reference to those views of church communion, to which we have adverted; and which may be considered as indicating a morbid sensitiveness about compromising the interests of truth and godliness, by any fellowship with those who, partaking of the Christian name, were yet not considered as coming up to the same standard of purity in doctrine and practice.

The following extract of a letter of the Rev. Patrick Buchanan, in reply to one of his, serves to indicate his state of feeling at the time:

"You desire me to let you know what I think of the affair relative to Nova Scotia. Really, dear brother, I cannot attain to any thoughts about it, worth the communicating. My mind recoils at the thought of one fitted for preaching the gospel in Gaelic leaving poor, desolate, secure Scotland. But if the Lord has determined your future labours and usefulness to be on the other side of the globe, we should certainly acquiesce in his determination as he shall be pleased to bring it about in his adorable providence, and say, 'The will of the Lord be done.'

"We know not however what may turn out yet before the meeting of Synod; and if they shall be directed to appoint you to remote America, I am glad to learn that you are disposed to consider it as the Lord's call to you to go, although the thoughts of your leaving us, I confess, very sensibly affect me."

Having referred the whole matter to the church courts, Messrs. Buchanan and Pagan presented a petition to the Pres-

bytery of Perth, that he be appointed to Pictou, accompanying it with the petition from Pictou.* That Presbytery transmitted both papers to the Synod, and the matter came up for consideration in the higher court on the 4th May 1786, when as its minutes record, "Both these petitions were read, a considerable time was then spent in conversation together and with Mr. MacGregor on the subject, and the question was agreed to be put, Grant the said petition and appoint Mr. MacGregor accordingly. After prayer for the Lord's countenance in the matter, the roll being called and votes marked, it carried unanimously, Grant and appoint, like as the Synod did and hereby do appoint Mr. James Drummond MacGregor, on the said mission accordingly. They excused Mr. MacGregor from all the appointments he is lying under in the Presbytery of Perth, except the ensuing Sabbath, transmitted him to the Presbytery of Glasgow, appointed him to deliver a lecture on Matt. xxviii. 19, 20 verses, a popular sermon on the last clause of verse 20, an Exegesis on the following question, viz., *An Christus sit Deus*, to give account of the first half of the first century of Church History, to read the first Psalm in Hebrew, and the Greek Testament *ad aperturam libri*, before the said Presbytery, against the last Tuesday of this month, at Glasgow, at which time the Synod appointed the Presbytery of Glasgow to hold their next ordinary meeting; and they appointed that, on the Presbytery's being satisfied with Mr. MacGregor's trials, they take the first opportunity to ordain him to the office of the holy ministry, and that Mr. MacGregor take the first opportunity afterward of setting off for Pictou in Nova Scotia to exercise his ministry among that people."

We now reach that period when his own narrative commences. We shall give it in full, only interrupting it to add any additional facts, that we may have learned from other sources, or such information regarding points touched on, as may serve to elucidate the subject.

"In the fall of 1784, the settlers of Pictou sent a petition to

* See Appendix A and B.

Scotland for a minister, who could preach Gaelic and English, and committed it to the charge of Bailie John Buchanan, and Mr. John Pagan, two respectable inhabitants of Greenock, directing them to apply to any Presbyterian court from whom they could obtain the most suitable answer to their petition. These gentlemen, after consulting with one another, their friends, and ministers of different denominations, laid the petition before the General Associate Synod (Antiburgher) in May 1786, craving that I (being the only preacher under the inspection of the Synod) might be appointed to Pictou. After some deliberation and conversation, the Synod unanimously granted the petition, appointed me to Pictou, and ordered the Presbytery of Glasgow, without delay, to take me upon trials for ordination, and, being ordained that I should take the first opportunity of sailing for Nova Scotia.

"I was thunderstruck by this decision of Synod, I by no means expected it, though I was not without fears of it. It put me into such a confusion, that I did not know what to say or think. I had considered it a case clear, not to myself only, but to the majority of the Synod, that I was called to preach to the Highlanders of Scotland, and of course that I could not be sent abroad. I had never met with an event to deprive me wholly of a night's sleep till then. That night I slept none, but tossed upon my bed, till it was time to rise next morning. Through the day several friends helped much to reconcile me to the Synod's appointment. Upon reflection I observed that there was at present no opening of great consequence for my preaching the gospel to the Highlanders at home,—that souls were equally precious wherever they were, and that I might be as successful abroad as at home. I resolved to go, but still overwhelming difficulties were before me. The mission was vastly important, and I was alone and weakness itself. I had to go among strangers, probably prejudiced against the religious denomination to which I belonged. Though the Synod told me, and I felt it comfort too, that I was not sent to make Seceders, but Christians; yet, as there was no minister before me,

except two or three Burgher ministers, nor any likely to come after me with whom I could hold communion, I felt as an exile from the church. Besides Nova Scotia was accounted so barren, cold, and dreary, that there was no living in it with comfort. Isa. xli. 14, was my comfort, 'Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy one of Israel.'"

He used to mention that when hesitating to fulfil the Synod's appointment, that passage of Scripture in which Jonah was represented as fleeing from the presence of the Lord was perpetually upon his mind, and seemed sounding in his ears, until he went to the meeting of Presbytery, and gave in his acceptance, when the passage went from his mind and never troubled him more.

It will be seen that the proceedings in reference to his departure were rather summary. The meeting of Synod at which the appointment was made took place on the 4th of May. No time was allowed for consideration. He had to fulfil an appointment for the following Sabbath, and yet prepare his trials for ordination, and make all his preparations for departure before the 30th of the same month, when the Presbytery was to meet.

The most of this time, as appears from his own account, was spent among his relations in Comrie. The intelligence of his appointment not only filled *their* minds with the sorest distress, but the whole population of his native place were affected by it. He had greatly endeared himself to all, and his departure caused a grief in the community, of which at the distance of seventy years the memory is still preserved.

On the Sabbath previous to his departure, he preached a farewell sermon. The discourse was solemn and impressive, and the people were much affected by it. In concluding the services he gave out the 91st Psalm to be sung.

"I of the Lord my God will say
He is my refuge still,
He is my fortress and my God
And in him trust I will.

"Assuredly he shall thee save,
And give deliverance
From subtle fowler's snare, and from
The noisome pestilence.

"His feathers shall thee hide; thy trust
Under his wings shall be;
His faithfulness shall be a shield
And buckler unto thee, &c."

"It was," says Mrs. Gilfillan, a daughter of the late Rev. Mr. Barlas, of Crieff, "a very touching occasion. He was much affected himself, as well as all that heard him. His text was from the words of Hagar, 'Thou God seest me.' It was a beautiful and serious discourse. He left Crieff next day. All our family were in tears, even the servants. He was much about our house, and was very familiar, and very amiable in his manners. Going out as a missionary to that untried field was thought a great undertaking, but he cheerfully left all for Christ, and to carry the glad tidings of salvation to that destitute people."

If such was the impression which his departure produced upon the mind of his acquaintance, our readers may imagine what must have been the feelings, on the occasion, of his father's family, each member of which was distinguished naturally by great tenderness of heart, and whose natural feelings were sublimated by religion, and through the amiableness of his character had been nourished to their utmost strength. An elder sister felt the separation with particular keenness. She was by this time married, but had no children, and she and her husband had resolved to move their residence to whatever place he would be settled in, but the distance to which he was going precluded all hope of her being with him. His father, now an old man whose head was whitened with the snows of more than seventy winters, felt the pang of separation from an only son in whom his strongest earthly hopes and his dearest earthly joys were centred. But a desire for the spread of the gospel had been his ruling passion. Preferring Jerusalem above his

chief joy, and love to Christ triumphing over parental affection, he was enabled at the call of God, as he deemed it, with a faith like that of Abraham, to lay that only son, like another Isaac, upon the altar for that important object. "Though he felt," says Mr. Gilfillan, "the yearnings of an affectionate father over an only son, he cheerfully acquiesced, and rejoiced that he had a son honoured to carry the gospel to the dark places of the earth."

The stronger feelings of the mother did not so readily yield, and his strong affection for her, as well as her unwillingness to part with him, tried him sorely. But the stern sense of duty prevailed, and in the spirit of him who said, "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart?" he replied to her entreaties, "Do not seek to hinder me, for if I remained I might be a heartbreak to you."

We have no particular account of his parting with his relatives, but it was a scene the remembrance of which hung heavily upon the mind of each member of the family through life. His father accompanied him about three-quarters of a mile to the residence of a brother-in-law, and then returned to spend the few remaining years of earthly pilgrimage, no longer cheered with the presence of his son, to whom he had looked as the stay of his declining years. To estimate his self-denial, we must not judge of it by the state of things in the present day. The modern missionary enterprise has rendered such sacrifices not uncommon. But that enterprise had not then commenced. The duty of surrendering those near and beloved for the cause of Christ in this way had not then been generally insisted on, was scarcely recognized as a duty resting upon the members of the church, and by example was almost unknown, nor had the church learned by experience the blessed reward of such conduct. The circumstances too in which his son was going involved a self-denial, such as parents, who now give their sons to the work of the Lord, can scarcely know. The mode in which he was sent out, we shall presently see, was in marked contrast with the manner in which modern missionaries go forth·

the field was one in which were expected and feared, if not actually endured, more of privations, with less of the comforts of civilized life, than in ordinary circumstances may be expected to fall to the lot of the herald of the Cross, to whatever part of the world he may go; and he seemed more thoroughly secluded from the world than in any modern missionary field—communication more difficult, and the prospect of meeting his friends again in the flesh more hopeless. But his faith failed not, and ere long, as we shall see, his heart was made joyful in hearing of his son's being the honoured instrument of turning many to righteousness, and building up the kingdom of the Redeemer in the land of his exile. Doubtless too he felt in his happy experience the fulfilment of the promise, "There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life." We shall notice his last days hereafter. In the meantime we must follow the young missionary to Glasgow.

"After spending a few days," says he, "among my relations and acquaintances in the parish of Comrie, I bade them a final adieu, and repaired to Glasgow, to give in my trials for ordination. The Presbytery passed them easily. I was ordained next day, viz., the 31st of May, as a vessel was expected to sail for Halifax in two or three days, and no other opportunity of a passage was expected that year. The Rev. James Robertson, of Kilmarnock, preached the ordination sermon from Isa. lx. 9, 'Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee.' It was an excellent, exhilarating sermon on the future success of the gospel in converting the Gentiles from their ignorance, idolatry, and general depravity, to the knowledge, love, and holiness of God in Christ; but its principal effect upon me was

a depression of spirits from unbelieving fears of my weakness, as if God could do nothing by my means."*

The sermon preached at his ordination greatly interested him. His mind reverted to it when engaged in his arduous work here, and he wrote to Mr. Robertson very earnestly for a copy of it, and urging its publication. Mr. Robertson in reply said that he never intended to publish any sermons in full, if he did publish, that it would be the substance merely of discourses, and giving the general observations of the discourse in question as follows :

1. Though the kingdom of Christ was but very confined for a long period of time, yet almost from the beginning of the world there were intimations of its enlargement and increase, Gen. ix. 27, xii. 3. Abraham became "*an heir of the world*," Rom. iv. 13; Gen. xlix. 10.

2. Many of the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament Scriptures, had a very glorious accomplishment in the conversion of the nations to Christ, soon after his ascension, Acts viii. 1; Isa. ii. 3, 4; Zech. xiv. 8; Isa. lxvi. 18–20; Psa. lxxxvii. 3, 4.

3. The extensive spreading of the gospel and the success of it in the world, considering the means and instruments which were employed for that end, is a strong proof of its divine original. It was not with the weapons of Mahomet, or Antichrist. It triumphed by the power of the Spirit of God, over the subtilty of philosophers, the craft of politicians, the superstition of selfish deceitful priests and their deluded votaries, the rage of persecutors, the deceit and fury of hell, and the wickedness and rooted prejudices of men of all sorts, Zech. iv. 7; Rom. xv. 19; 2 Corinthians x. 4.

4. Though the boundaries of Christ's kingdom may at times be confined and the success of his gospel not so eminent, yet his work of conversion and edification of souls in faith and holiness is never absolutely at a stand, Psa. xlv. 17, xxii. 27–31, lxxxvii. 5; Isa. xlix. 20, xxvii. 13, lix. 19, 20. Christ is still making progress, *upon the word of truth, meekness, and righteousness*, Psa. xlv. 3–5.

5. There have been great revolutions in the world to promote the advancement of Christ's kingdom, and there will be as remarkable ones as ever, Isa. xlii. 9–16, xliii. 3–14; Hag. ii. 6, vii. 22; Psa. xlvi. 8–10; John xvii. 2. Christ is guilty of no usurpation in setting up his kingdom any where, for he is the natural and appointed heir of all things, and makes all his servants better subjects to their natural and original sovereign.

6. While we should be thankful for the Lord's goodness in preserving the purity of the gospel in any measure, and raising up any friends to

* See Appendix C.

favour it, so we should consider this as the first fruits of a more glorious harvest approaching. Great events have often small beginnings, 1 Kings xviii. 44; Exek. xlvii. 1–11. So Isa. xi. 7, xliii. 20; Psa. lxxii. 9–12.

7. In order that the gospel may be published and Christ's kingdom enlarged, there is to be a trade set on foot in a great measure now unknown, in cargoes of Bibles to the barbarous nations, cargoes of ministers and missionaries to them, and cargoes of them by sea and *chariotfulls* and litterfuils of them by land, to places where the gospel is preached. Our text, Isa. lxvi. 18–20, xliii. 14; Zech. xiv. 20; Psa. lxxii. 10; Isa. xxiii. 18; Mic. iv. 13; Isa. xlix. 23; Psa. vii. 27.

8. Those who are the friends of the gospel are not to be discouraged because of great mountains of opposition standing in the way of all this —because in the light of sense and reason, there is in the complexion of the present times, little which has a favourable aspect this way. Our God is Jehovah, Lord of Hosts, almighty, all-wise, and unchangeably faithful and gracious, Zeph. iii. 17; Psa. cii. 15; Dan. ii. 44; Psa. cx. 5, 6, xcvii. 5.

Improve the subject, for thankfulness, for faith, and hope, for reproof to those who pretend to pray and wish well to the gospel, and yet are like the Bishop, who would give his blessing to the beggar, but neither sixpence, nor penny, nor even half-penny to him, Psalm xlv. 12, for encouragement to those who are sent on distant and difficult missions for the spread of the gospel, Acts xxii. 21; Jer. xlv. 5; Psa. lxv. 5; Deut. xxxiii. 27; Jer. vii. 17, 18; Matt. xxviii. 20.

Mr. Robertson was known as a man of strong natural powers, and considerable theological attainments, but of an eccentric turn of mind. But we have inserted the above sketch of the sermon preached on the occasion, not merely from the interest which the Dr. felt in it, but as an indication of the extent to which the missionary spirit was already beginning to prevail in the body. The very texts assigned him as subjects of trial for ordination evinced the same thing. The great modern missionary enterprise had not then commenced. But its light was beginning to appear. The first beams of the coming morn were gilding the western hill tops. The more intelligent minds in the Christian Church had felt their awakening power, the more advanced spirits had caught the inspiration of the approaching day, and the church was preparing her measures accordingly. The Secession Church showed herself to have "understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do" by thus early directing her attention to the destitute beyond

her own borders. Thus she was not only the principal means in the hands of providence of preserving religion in Scotland, when spiritual deadness had settled down upon the face of the country, but of sending the gospel to distant regions of the earth.

The sending forth of Dr. MacGregor, however, was by no means the commencement of her Foreign Missionary operations. For years both branches had been sending ministers across the Atlantic to preach the gospel in the new settlements of the Western Continent. In the year 1753, more than twenty years previously, the General Associate Synod had sent forth two missionaries to Pennsylvania, although its ministers were then few in number, and insufficient to meet the wants of the church at home. And she continued afterward steadily to respond, to the extent of her ability, to every call upon her. The example was followed a few years later by the Associate, or Burgher Synod, so that for some time scarce a year elapsed without one or more labourers being sent abroad. These missionaries were the means of planting flourishing churches in many parts of the United States and the British Provinces. Their labours were principally directed to Pennsylvania, New York, and Kentucky, but also extended over other States, while in many of the older settlements of Canada West, in which Presbyterianism now prevails, the gospel was first proclaimed amid difficulty and trial by ministers of the same body. Even previous to Dr. MacGregor several ministers had also been sent to Nova Scotia.

But it is necessary that a few remarks should be made here as to the manner in which these missions were conducted. In the first place it will be observed that, in the selection of agents, the higher court exercised the right of disposing of its members as it pleased; and any refusal to submit to its decisions was regarded as contumacy, calling for the heaviest censure. Doubtless this power was at times exercised harshly and in disregard of the feelings of parties concerned; but we cannot help regarding it as a salutary one. We believe that the church

of Rome owes much of its efficiency to the spirit of discipline among its clergy; and we believe that there will not be the same efficiency in our Protestant Churches as Missionary Institutes, till their ministers hold themselves in readiness to go wherever Christ may call them, to occupy the sphere which he has appointed, and to regard the decisions of the church, arrived at after due deliberation, under the influence of a desire to promote the divine glory, and with direction earnestly sought from the great Head of the Church, as indicating his will on the subject. It was in this light that Dr. MacGregor regarded the matter, and to this we may say that we are indebted for his coming to Nova Scotia.

But the principle adopted in conducting their missionary operations deserves particular attention. When the modern missionary enterprise commenced, it was thought by many wise and good men, that the work might be most efficiently performed by voluntary associations of Christian men belonging to different denominations, self-organized, outside of the church, for the purpose. In this view the General Associate Synod could not conscientiously concur. Hence when a few years later the zeal of the church shone forth so brightly, and led to the formation of the London and other Missionary Societies, they as a body took no share in such movements, though individuals among them, the number of whom increased, became the most liberal contributors to such institutions. The reason for this was to be found partly in the fact, that they had already been engaged in missions of their own, but principally that they did not concur in the propriety of the principle upon which these associations were based, and the measures they adopted. They believed that Christ had committed the work of spreading the gospel to his church, and not to any self-constituted society. And much of their mode of management they regarded as objectionable. When they saw committees under no ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and properly vested with no ecclesiastical authority, consisting in part at least of laymen, selecting agents for preaching the gospel to the heathen, sitting in

judgment upon their qualifications, and even ordaining them to the work of the ministry, they could not but regard such a proceeding as an interference with the order which Christ has established in his church, and the basis of such associations involving such procedure, to be unscriptural. These views were for a time regarded by many as sectarian and bigoted, but they are now being generally adopted by churches both in the United States and the mother country.

But while commending the principle upon which the early missions of the Secession were based, we cannot commend the mode in which they were conducted. The Synod carried their objections to seeking notoriety to such a fastidious extreme, that they published no reports of their proceedings. But their management was chiefly deficient in the fact, that in sending forth missionaries little or nothing was done for their present or future comfort. In this respect the circumstances in which Dr. MacGregor and the early missionaries were sent forth, present a strong contrast with the manner in which the modern missionary goes forth to his labours. The latter has not only his passage paid to the scene of his labours, but, at the expense of the church, he receives what is necessary to equip him thoroughly with what is necessary for his comfort and usefulness, and a board at home are responsible for his subsequent maintenance. But when the first missionaries of the Secession were sent forth, the most that was done was to take collections to aid in paying their passage. These were often inadequate, and sometimes, as in Dr. MacGregor's case, were not made at all. And no provision was in any case made for their subsequent maintenance. They were sent to disheartening toil, to mental and bodily privations, in a low state of society, with the country still a wilderness, and left to obtain a maintenance as they best might, among a people not in circumstances, if ever so willing, to afford them any thing but a scanty support; and sometimes were left to struggle on, uncheered by any expressions of sympathy, affection, or encouragement, except from some personal friends, whose letters coming at distant intervals

were indeed as good news from a far country, and with *none* of that *eclat*, which now surrounds the missionary, and which it is to be feared sometimes acts upon his mind as the hope of worldly glory animates the earthly warrior.

It is but justice to the church at home to observe that the ministers there were enduring sacrifices of a similar kind. The income of John Brown of Haddington, never exceeded £50 per annum. We have seen an estimate drawn up in the year 1774, of the contributions of the two Seceding bodies, in which the average salary of their ministers is estimated at £60. A considerable proportion would have considered themselves

"Passing rich on forty pounds a year,"

while some had not twenty. The people adhering to them were generally in very humble circumstances, and the liberality so characteristic of the present day had not been evoked, and it is not therefore surprising, that little effort was made for the comfort of those going abroad.

Still under all the circumstances of the case, we consider the conduct of the early Secession missionaries to Nova Scotia, as exhibiting a self-denial not surpassed in modern missionary enterprises. "Had the toils, the perils, the sacrifices of our fathers been endured under the light of the Foreign Missionary enterprise in some of the high places of foreign operations, they would have been chronicled as martyrs, and if not canonized, they would have at least been made immortal."*

In Dr. MacGregor's case, two incidents which we shall now relate will be sufficient to show the manner in which he came out. When leaving his native place, Donald M'Nab, a brother of his second sister's husband, asked him what he meant to do for means, he replied, "Trust in Providence." Donald immediately responded, "Here is £20, which you can return when you are able." He took the money and some time after returned it. The other perhaps is still more interesting. One of his sisters borrowed two guineas which she lent him. He some

* Speech of Rev. J. Waddell at Synod's Missionary Meeting, 1856.

years after sent her £10, which she, with prudent Scotch care, put out at interest, and in her old age the interest served to pay her seat rent in the church.

The time allowed between his appointment and his departure was so short, that the family had not time to prepare an outfit for him, but during the following winter his mother and sister were busily employed in spinning, weaving, knitting, &c., for him, and as the result of their labours, a large stock of such articles of bodily comfort, as industrious housewives can manufacture from the produce of their flocks, or from their flax, were prepared, and sent after him. And it may be mentioned to the credit of the person concerned, as well as indicating the affection and esteem which he had won by his amiable disposition, that an humble seamstress in Crieff, named Jane Salmon, considered an excellent shirt maker, rendered her services in making his, and refused all compensation, on account of their being for Dr. MacGregor.

When in addition to the ties to bind him to his native land, and the unfavourable circumstances in which he was going forth, we add that the country to which he was going was then regarded as in soil and climate presenting only cold, dreariness, and barrenness, scarcely fit for human habitations, and almost a place of hopeless banishment from the Christian world, and that the modern missionary enterprise *had not familiarized the church with the idea of such sacrifices for the sake of the perishing*, we think we are justified in saying, that he exhibited an example of self-denying devotedness to the cause of Christ, which may be placed along side the most noble instances of the kind, which the annals of the Christian Church record.

Yet never did he complain. Never did he talk of those sacrifices in "leaving kindred and country," which occupy so large a portion of missionary records. He was too strongly influenced by sense of duty, for sentimentalism of this sort, and he had sufficient humility to follow the Saviour's direction, "When ye shall have done all these things, which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which

was our duty to do." There never was at any period of his life any thing of doing his sacrifices before men to be seen of them—any parading of his self-denial, or sounding a trumpet regarding it. On the contrary, while manifesting a self-denial which would put to shame many of our modern missionaries, whose every want had been supplied by the liberality of friends at home, an incident which occurred on the eve of his departure, will show how his benevolent spirit caused his deep poverty to abound to the riches of his liberality. Ridiculous as it may appear in the present day, it was then customary for ministers to wear a species of cocked hat. He had spent on what he deemed necessary articles of outfit all the money he thought he could spare, except one guinea which he had reserved for the purpose of obtaining this necessary article. In this emergency a strong appeal came for some benevolent object. He hesitated whether to give his guinea or buy the hat. He however determined on the former. He did not however go without his hat. A day or two afterward a friend meeting him said, "I hear that you are going to America." "Yes." "Well, you are not going with that hat. Come in here." So he took him into one of the best establishments in Glasgow, and made him a present of one of the best quality.

We conclude this chapter with giving his own account of his departure and voyage to Halifax, with a notice of the state of society there.

"Next day, (viz., that following the ordination,) I came to Greenock, along with the Rev. John Buist, to whose activity alone the success of this business was owing. He did all that he could to assist and comfort me, and not then only, but his friendship continued all the days of his life, and was one of my principal consolations, till Divine Providence removed him and raised up others. On the 3d of June I went on board the brig *Lily*, Captain Smith, bound to Halifax. There were along with me in the cabin, three captains, two lieutenants of the army, and two gentlemen emigrants. I had no reason to complain of their civility all along, but I had abundant cause to

bewail their impiety. Songs, cards, drunkenness, and often horribly profane swearing, were their common afternoon employment. At times reasoning and advice would have some effect on them, at other times none.

"Next morning was the Sabbath and the king's birth day. On board the *Lily* there was no appearance of a Sabbath, except with two or three steerage passengers, and one of the hands, whom I observed now and then retiring to read his Bible. The sailors had very many things to do and arrange in order to prepare for encountering the swelling waves of the sea, which were evidently works of necessity, if it was a work of necessity for us to have sailed before Monday, a question which I suppose had not been discussed. "*No Sabbath at sea*" was the common reply of the sailors to such of the passengers as accused them of profaning it.

"Nothing worth mentioning happened during the voyage, unless that the Sabbath days were so stormy that on two of them only I could stand upon deck to perform public worship. I landed at Halifax, July 11th, and stayed two or three days there getting my baggage ashore, and looking out for a vessel to carry it round to Pictou. The immorality of Halifax shocked me not a little, and I hastened out of it hoping better things of the country."

This character Halifax retained for many years, chiefly owing to its being the principal naval and military establishment in British America. The smallness of the town at that time, compared with the number of soldiers and sailors stationed there, rendered this influence more injurious. The following extract of a letter written some years before may be regarded as descriptive of its condition at this time, the years of war that had elapsed having made no improvement. "Halifax may contain about one thousand* houses, great and small, many of which are employed as barracks, hospitals for the army and navy, and other public uses. The inhabitants may

* Surely a mistake, probably four hundred.

be about three thousand, one third of which are Irish, and many of them Roman Catholics; about one fourth Germans and Dutch, the most industrious and useful settlers amongst us, and the rest English with a very small number of Scotch. We have upwards of one hundred licensed houses, and perhaps as many more which retail spirituous liquors without license; so that the business of one half of the town is to sell rum, and the other half to drink it. You may from this simple circumstance judge of our morals, and naturally infer that we are not enthusiasts in religion."* There was at that time little faithful gospel preaching. It is gratifying, however, to be able to remark, that there has been considerable improvement apparent in its religious character for years, we believe partly owing to the fact that the naval and military establishments have been diminished, while the general population has increased, but principally to the fact of God in his Providence sending thither a number of excellent ministers of various denominations.

Before however following the narrative farther we must give some account of Nova Scotia, its early settlement, and its moral and physical condition at the time of his arrival.

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* Letter to Dr. Stiles of Boston, quoted by Haliburton.

CHAPTER IV.

STATE OF NOVA SCOTIA, BEFORE AND AT THE TIME OF HIS ARRIVAL.

"A land of brooks of waters, of fountains, and depths that spring out of valleys and hills—a land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass."—Deut. viii. 7, 9.

THE province of Nova Scotia, according to its present limits, lies within the latitudes of 43° and 47° north, and the longitudes of 60° and 67° west. It consists of a Peninsula, usually known as Nova Scotia proper, connected with the continent by an isthmus twelve miles wide, and the island of Cape Breton, separated from the mainland by a narrow passage, called the Strait of Canso. In length it extends a distance of about three hundred and fifty miles, and its average breadth is about seventy. But from the extent to which it is cut into by inlets of the sea, and the amount of surface in the interior occupied by rivers and lakes, its superficial extent is not so large as might be expected. Its computed area is 18,600 square miles, or about 12,000,000 acres.

Along the southern coast, the shore is generally rugged, but it seldom rises into steep cliffs, so that the general aspect is not romantic or sublime, yet it is generally picturesque, and in many places the scenery is rich and beautiful. In the interior the country is generally traversed by hills, which however scarcely ever rise to the height of mountains, the highest elevation being estimated at fifteen hundred feet above the level of the sea. From these flow down many small streams, which, though not long in their course, render the country one of the best

watered on the face of the earth, and being generally navigable for small vessels, afford great conveniences for trade. The surface also is much broken by innumerable lakes, so that the general aspect of the province is that of a hilly country, agreeably diversified with hill and dale, river and lake, forest and grassy glade.

In respect to soil and fitness for agricultural purposes, Nova Scotia presents a great variety. Along the whole Atlantic coast it is barren and stony, but in the interior the soil is generally capable of cultivation, and much of it, especially on the Bay of Fundy and the Gulf of St. Lawrence, is of the very best quality. Many of the hills are fertile to their summits, while the richness and beauty of many of the valleys cannot be surpassed. The province, however, is chiefly remarkable for its immense mineral resources. These, with its valuable fisheries, and its convenient situation for trade, will yet render it one of the most important commercial and manufacturing places of the new world.

The climate of Nova Scotia, like that of America generally, possesses the characteristic of having a higher temperature in summer and a lower in winter than the same latitudes of the old world. From its position on the coast it has more humidity than places in the interior of the continent, and for the same reason has not the extremes of heat and cold, which prevail in the neighbouring provinces. The most unfavourable impressions have been abroad regarding its climate. It has been represented as enveloped in fog, covered so deeply with snow as to render travelling impracticable, and bound for the most of the year in the chains of frost. Nothing can be more unfounded. The fogs which prevail on the southern coast at certain seasons do not extend inland, so that at the distance of a dozen miles from the shore there will be clear air and brilliant sunshine, at the very time that thick fogs come upon the coast from the sea, while on the northern coast there is not on an average above one day's fog in the year. Though the winter is more severe than in Britain, yet it is not so much so as in the

neighbouring provinces or in portions of the north-eastern States. Of the healthiness of the climate there can be no question. There are no diseases peculiar to the country, and epidemics or other diseases do not rage with peculiar virulence, while those violent and protracted intermittent fevers, prevalent in other parts of America, are never generated here, and those afflicted with them will on their removal to Nova Scotia entirely recover in a short time.

For some time after its discovery, Nova Scotia received but little attention from Europeans. When it did attract notice, the first attempts at colonization were made by the French. At that time, under the name of Acadia, it embraced not only what is now included under the government of Nova Scotia, but also Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. As early as the year 1606, they sent forth an expedition for the purpose of colonization, and though the settlement of the country was interrupted by the uncertain tenure by which it was held, it being alternately in the possession of the English and French, yet in the early part of the last century their settlements had made considerable progress.

In the year 1713 Nova Scotia was finally ceded to Britain. But the French still retained Cape Breton and Prince Edward Island, and claimed a large portion of New Brunswick. From this time efforts were made by the English for the colonization of Nova Scotia, but for some time with but little success, in consequence of the hostility of the French and the deadlier hostility of the Indians, who were leagued with them. The first effectual attempt of importance made by the former was at Chebucto, since called Halifax, by Lord Cornwallis, who, in 1749, landed a body of 3760 persons, chiefly disbanded soldiers and sailors. About the same time invitations were sent to various parts of Europe, inviting Protestants to settle in the British provinces. In consequence, a large number of Germans arrived in this province, who principally settled at Lunenburg. A few of them however reached the eastern part of the province.

We need scarcely remark, that the early settlement of the

country was attended with great toil and privation. The majestic primeval forest, which covered the whole surface of the ground, seemed an almost insuperable barrier to the cultivation of the soil. The difficulties of forming a home in such a situation would not now appear very formidable to those brought up in the new States or the frontier settlements of America. But those who came from an old country, entirely unacquainted with such a mode of life, and unaccustomed to the use of the gun or the axe, were in very different circumstances. The winter seemed to them terrible. Of a severity of which they had in the old country no conception, ill provided either with clothing or shelter against its inclemency, and with none of the facilities for locomotion, which the inhabitants now possess, we need not wonder that it was at first regarded as truly appalling. More fearful still was the hostility of the Indians. The first settlers could scarcely enter the neighbouring woods without being either shot, scalped, or taken prisoners. When the latter was their fate, torture and death were their lot, or if spared, they were dragged by long marches through trackless forests, suffering intolerable hardships, and were finally sold to the French as merchandise, in exchange for arms and ammunition. The French inhabitants, who remained in the province, had taken an oath of neutrality; but under the continual instigation of their countrymen in Canada and Cape Breton, and especially of their priests, they were excited to acts of hostility, which led the government in the year 1755, to remove them from the province and disperse them over the other colonies.

In the year 1758 Louisburg was taken by the British, and Cape Breton and all Prince Edward Island immediately passed under the English sway. In the year 1761 a formal treaty of peace was made with the Indians, and the hatchet buried with due solemnity. These events prepared the way for the peaceable settlement of the country. About the years 1760 and 1761, in consequence of the invitations of Governor Lawrence, a large number of persons removed from the old American colonies, particularly Connecticut and Massachusetts, attracted especially by

the fertile lands from which the French Acadians had been driven. These settled Horton, Cornwallis, Falmouth, Newport, Truro, Onslow, and some other portions of the province. About the same time Colonel Alexander MacNutt brought out a few families of north of Ireland people who settled in Londonderry, giving that township the name of their native place. A few of the same people also settled at Noel, on the opposite side of the bay, and have extended through Colchester and part of Hants and Halifax counties. In the year 1773 came the ship Hector to Pictou, the first emigrant vessel from Scotland to this province. Since that time the emigration from Scotland has been so constant, that the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of the eastern portion of Nova Scotia are either Scotch or of Scottish descent, and probably more than half of the inhabitants of the whole province are of the same character.

These successive settlements considerably increased the population, yet from the failure of land speculations in subsequent years, and from the American revolutionary war the province rather retrograded, so that in 1781 the English population was estimated at only 12,000. The conclusion of the American war brought a large influx of population. Several regiments which had served in the war were disbanded, and received grants of land in various parts of the province. And large numbers of refugees, or loyalists as they called themselves, preferring the protection of the British Government, removed to Nova Scotia. Of this class it was estimated that 20,000 landed during the years 1783 and 1784. A number of these afterwards removed from the province, and in the latter year, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Cape Breton were formed into separate governments. So that the population of the province at the time of his arrival would probably not exceed 30,000.

From this account of the early colonization of the province, our readers will have a view of the extent to which it was settled at the time of Dr. MacGregor's arrival, and the classes

by which it was first peopled. There was Halifax—containing a mixed population of three or four thousand—to the westward was Lunenburg settled by Germans. The other leading places in the west, as well as Onslow and Truro, were settled by emigrants from the old colonies, especially New England. Londonderry was settled by north of Ireland people, and a few of the same class had occupied some neighbouring portions of Colchester and Hants counties. Amherst and portions of Cumberland had received a body of emigrants from Yorkshire and other places in the north of England, while Pictou and some portions of Hants had been settled by emigrants from Scotland. Eastward of Pictou, except the remnants of Acadian French in Cape Breton, there was scarcely a settlement worthy of notice. Even the settlements referred to were small, and the ground they occupied appeared but as spots upon the face of the country.

We must, however, give some account of the moral and religious condition of the inhabitants. From what has been said, it will be seen that there was much in the persons by whom the province was settled unfavourable to its social well being. A large proportion of the population consisted of disbanded soldiers and sailors, who were not only unfitted by the idle habits acquired in the army and navy for any employment requiring industry and perseverance, but introduced wide-spread profligacy. Then a portion of the refugees, or loyalists as they were called, were very undeserving the honour they received. Many of them doubtless left their homes in the old colonies from a sincere attachment to British rule, and were men of high principle. But others had joined the British cause from the hope of plunder under British protection. There was no class whom the Americans so detested,—and from what we have heard of some of them in Nova Scotia, we believe that this character was not undeserved.

But "when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him." Among the emigrants from different quarters, were many who feared God, and

loved his ordinances. The settlers from the old colonies, who arrived both before and after the Revolutionary war, brought with them not only the steady habits and the persevering enterprise of New England, but the religious principles of their Puritan forefathers. The Germans carried hither the simple faith from which the churches of the Fatherland had not then departed, while the Scotch and Scotch Irish as thoroughly transplanted to this western wilderness the sturdy Presbyterianism for which their covenanting forefathers had shed their blood.

Already the gospel standard was raised by ministers of different denominations. The Church of England had its ministers in the province from the time that it was first settled, supported partly by the British Government, and partly by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. A few old Methodists who had emigrated from England, began about the year 1779 to hold meetings among themselves for prayer and exhortation. Through these meetings several persons were raised up as exhorters and occasional preachers. Among these was Mr. Wm. Black, who was shortly after accepted as a regular preacher, and was at this time, with several others, labouring in various parts of the province. There were also a few Congregationalist ministers in the Western part of the province. Several Presbyterian clergymen had also arrived. The Rev. Andrew Brown, afterward Professor of Rhetoric in the University of Edinburgh, had arrived the same year, and was preaching in Halifax to a mixed congregation of Scottish Presbyterians and New England Congregationalists; and three ministers of the Burgher Synod were already prosecuting their labours. The Baptist body, though now one of the most numerous and influential in the province, had but few ministers or churches, but that important movement, in which most of the Baptist churches of the province originated, viz., the rise of what were called the New Lights, had just reached its height. Without some account of this, it would be impossible to give any thing like a view of the early state of the province in a religious point of view.

This movement originated with an individual named Henry

Alline, who commenced of his own notion, or as he regarded it, by the call of the Spirit of God, to preach, as early as the year 1776. He first preached at Falmouth where he had previously resided, and about Cornwallis and Horton. Having gained adherents in these places, the people took measures to have him ordained, but difficulties having arisen on the part of the clergymen applied to, he was ordained an itinerant preacher, by some laymen.

Shortly after he published his peculiar views in a book entitled, "Two mites on some of the most important and much disputed points of divinity, cast into the treasury for the poor and needy, and committed to the perusal of the unprejudiced and impartial reader, by Henry Alline, servant of the Lord to his churches." There are but few copies of this work now in existence, and we have never had the perusal of one; but we have seen a considerable volume in reply to it, by the Rev. Jonathan Scott, of Yarmouth, which contains copious extracts from it. It is not easy to give a clear statement of his views, for his notions were so crude, that he could not have defined them clearly himself. At one time he is an Arminian, and at another time professes to confute their views. It may be said, however, that he either denied all the leading doctrines of Christianity, or so misrepresented them that he might as well have denied them. The doctrines of election and the divine decrees he especially assailed, and he has shown more than the usual ignorance on the subject. The doctrine of original sin he professed to hold, but explained it in the following manner: All the souls of the human race were emanations from or parts of the one great Spirit,—and were actually present in Eden at the making and breaking of the covenant, that we all acted for ourselves on that occasion, and thus all the souls that have ever lived or will ever live in the world, were actually in the first transgression. He supposed that our first parents were pure spirits, and that the material world was not then made. But, in order that mankind, in consequence of the fall, might not sink into utter destruction, this world was produced, and men

clothed with material bodies, and in them enjoy a state of probation for immortal happiness.* Conversion he explained as Christ's "changing and taking possession of the inmost soul, which is at the time of the change completely sanctified." The reason why man after conversion is not without sin, he explained thus, "Man in his fallen state consists of body, soul, and spirit, an animal or elemental body, a spiritual and immortal body, and an immortal mind. And at the hour of conversion, the Son of God takes possession of the inmost soul or immortal mind, but leaveth the fallen immortal body in its fallen state still." He denied the resurrection of the "elemental bodies," and maintained that they would be dissolved and burnt up. He denied the utility of water baptism, but sometimes practised it when desired.

There were other subjects on which he broached some peculiar views, but the above will be sufficient to show the crudeness of his notions. Indeed the extracts from his writings that we have seen, would almost indicate unsoundness of mind. Yet he was possessed of a lively and earnest mode of address as a preacher, and in private his manner was very attractive to ordinary people, so that he excited great attention wherever he went. Refusing any thing like a pastoral charge, he traversed the then settled parts of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island, preaching his own doctrines, or preaching on the ordinary subjects of Christian doctrine and keeping his peculiar views in the background, depreciating the regular ministers of the gospel or denouncing them in the lowest terms, urging separation from other communions and forming societies after his own model. So successful was he that there was scarcely a place that he visited, in which he did not make a breach in the religious societies already formed, to whatever denomination they might belong. After prosecuting this course for several years, he went to the United States in September 1783, and died on the February following, having established a

* Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Art. Allinites.

small sect in that country who continued for a time under the name of Allinites.

With all his fanaticism we have reason to believe that he was a good man; and as he preached the necessity of regeneration, and that in an earnest and impressive manner, at a time and in places where there was a great want of sound gospel ministrations, we may hope that through his instrumentality souls were added to the Lord. Yet the good he did was accompanied by much evil, if not more than counterbalanced by it. Every where he filled the minds of people with delusive notions—puffing up the most ignorant with extraordinary self-conceit of their spiritual enlightenment, and substituting the fancies of a disordered imagination for the faith and holiness of the gospel, and exciting to every extravagance, that would render their religious proceedings a mockery. Every where he excited division in other Christian societies, so that Mr. Scott, in his work referred to, says, "Not only is our land overspread with tenets and principles, which by their plain construction and meaning, and their most natural and direct tendency, overthrow and destroy the doctrines of divine revelation, but also this Province is overspread with religious contentions, divisions, and separations, so that there is scarcely a church or religious community in the Province, but what our author has broken in upon, and drawn off a party from it by some means or other." We need not therefore wonder that he and his followers were, by other denominations, generally regarded as enemies of the church.

It will be seen that the founder of the sect had passed away a short time previous to Dr. MacGregor's arrival; but under the teachers whom he had commissioned, the movement was just at its height. If it is difficult to give a clear account of his doctrines, it is more difficult to give an account of the doctrines of his followers, as they not only differed from him, but from one another; and under the claim to superior illumination from which they derived their name, each new teacher proclaimed his own fancies as the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

The Presbytery of Pictou, in a letter some years later, thus describe them: "It is impossible to give any just account of their principles, because like the lips of the strange woman their 'ways are movable,' that you cannot know them. Their chief topics are plunging and conversion, concerning the last of which they entertain very extravagant notions. They evidently differ from one another in their sentiments, while they profess to be agreed—yea, the very same persons affect to believe things contradictory, and every new teacher or succeeding day brings a new doctrine." Dr. MacGregor afterwards describes their sentiments as "a mixture of Calvinism, Antinomianism, and enthusiasm." This seems to be the most correct account of them that we have seen.

In general it may be said of them that in their teaching they were characterized by the use of Antinomian paradoxes, such as that sin would never hurt a believer—that a believer was not bound by the law—that God loved a believer even when falling into the vilest sins—and that such were sure of salvation however they lived; that in their religious proceedings they were characterized by the wildest extravagance, and that in their outward conduct, many carried out their principles to their legitimate issue. A missionary of the London Missionary Society, who came in contact with them some years later, thus describes them, "They deny the divine rite of infant baptism; they maintain that conviction is conversion—that after they are converted they are freed from the performance of every Christian duty—and that they are sure of salvation though they live in the neglect of every command, and daily practise every vice, so that among them Sabbath breaking, swearing, drinking, and such like sins, are not considered sins against the blessed God." This picture of their moral principles, if applied to the whole, may be considered overcharged, but it was too true of a large portion of them.

We may add in explanation, that most of the churches founded by them afterward received Baptist teachers, and adopted Baptist views. They thus abandoned the notions of

their founder, and since that time the extravagance which marked the origin of the movement has been toned down, and they have become more fixed in their theological principles. From these most of the Baptist churches, particularly those of the Free Will Baptists and Free Christian Baptists, in the Lower Provinces originated. A few, however, continued under the original standard till a very recent period.*

But we must give a more particular account of the early settlement of Pictou and its condition at this time. This fine county, which formed the principal sphere of Dr. MacGregor's labours, and with the material and moral progress of which his name is so intimately associated, lies on the southern shore of the Straits of Northumberland. It is about forty miles long by about twenty in breadth. Its coast is indented by a number of harbours, the principal of which are River John, Carriboo, Pictou, and Merigomish. Into these flow River John, the East, West, and Middle Rivers of Pictou, and Sutherland, French, and Barney's River of Merigormish, besides smaller streams, so that it is well watered throughout. Along the shore the land is generally level, but in the interior, ranges of hills extend in every direction, presenting scenery of the most varied and beautiful description. A range of higher elevation, being a branch of the Cobequid hills, extends along the western boundary. Another range traverses the southern portions of the county, which, though not rising to as great an elevation, has a broken and rocky appearance.

It has no marsh land, but along its rivers is much valuable intervale, and much of the upland soil even to the summits of the hills is fertile, and every where it is capable of cultivation. It has also abundance of mineral resources, especially coal, iron ore, freestone, gypsum, and limestone.

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* For part of the above information regarding Henry Alline and the New Lights, we are indebted to the Rev. George Christie, of Yarmouth. We had prepared a fuller account of the religious character and condition of the early settlers of Nova Scotia, but the materials of the present volume have so increased that we have been obliged to defer it.

Although Pictou is now the first agricultural county in the province, and has a larger population than any other, with the exception of the Metropolitan county of Halifax, yet it was one of the latest in being settled. The French had made no permanent settlement there at all. They had visited the place, and, just before the final cession of Nova Scotia to the English, had made preparation for occupying it, but they never accomplished their purpose.

In the year 1765, a grant of 200,000 acres of land, embracing the western part of the county and part of the county of Colchester, was made to fourteen persons in the city of Philadelphia, usually known as the Philadelphia Company. Some of the shares were afterward transferred, so that the celebrated Dr. Witherspoon, and John Pagan of Greenock, became proprietors. The condition of their grant was that they should settle so many families upon it within a given time. Before however their grant was actually laid out, Col. MacNutt obtained a grant of a considerable block of land, where the town of Pictou now stands, and extending a considerable distance along the shore of the harbour. This grant was afterward transferred to Governor Patterson, and has been commonly known since as the Cochrane grant.

The Philadelphia company sent the first band of settlers to Pictou. They consisted of six families from the borders of Pennsylvania and Maryland, who sailed from Philadelphia in May 1767, in a small vessel called the Hope, of Rhode Island, Captain Hull. Having been delayed by calling at Halifax to obtain information regarding the coast around, they reached Pictou Harbour on the 10th of June. The people of Truro having heard of them in Halifax, several persons set out to meet them and arrived at the harbour the same afternoon. They saw the vessel coming up the harbour, and kindled fires on the shore to attract those on board farther up. The latter saw the fires, but concluded that they were made by the savages, and held a consultation whether they should oppose them or submit to them, and resolved upon resistance.

On the following morning they saw the party from Truro coming along shore, and by examining them with their spy-glasses found that they were white people. That afternoon they landed at the point on Mr. Thomas Waller's farm just above Halliburton stream. The prospect before them was dreary indeed. One unbroken forest extended to the water's edge, an alder swamp occupied the lower portions of what is now the town of Pictou, and there were no inhabitants, but Indians, whom they feared as savages. Mrs. Patterson used to tell that she leaned her head against a tree, which stood on the point, in despair. She thought that if there was a broken hearted creature in the world, she was the one. It was, however, no time for giving way to despondency, and they commenced erecting their shanties and preparing for a settlement. They had a supply of provisions and each was allotted a farm lot. They discovered however that Governor Patterson had obtained the most eligible site for a town. They did however lay out a town at Waller's Point already referred to, but it was never built.

Of the six families who came in the Hope, two removed to Truro, the remaining four set to work energetically to provide for their support, but of course little crop could be raised that season. For some time they obtained a large portion of their food by hunting, a work in which they usually had the assistance of the Indians, whose jealousy however it sometimes required all their address to allay; or by catching the fish with which the harbour and rivers abounded. On the following spring they proceeded to Truro for seed potatoes. Though the distance is only forty miles it required three days to perform the journey, there being no path, and they being the first even to make a blaze on their course. They carried home on their backs what they planted that year. The proceeds were not sufficient for their subsistence during the subsequent winter. In the following spring they again proceeded to Truro for a supply of seed, but they only brought the eyes, which they had scooped out of the potatoes. They could carry a large quantity

of them, which yielded enough to keep them the following season.

The heads of the families which remained were Robert Patterson, Dr. John Harris, John Rogers, and John MacCabe. About a year after their arrival they were joined by two families from Truro, and two or three from Cumberland, and in the year 1771 a few more families removed from Philadelphia to join their brethren. Some trade also was carried on, but several got discouraged by the long and cold winters, so that little progress was made, till the arrival of the ship Hector, with passengers from Scotland in the year 1773, from which time the actual settlement of the place may be dated.

Some of the proprietors of the Philadelphia company offered liberal terms for the settlement of their grant. They made an agreement with one John Ross, by which they were to give him and every person he might bring to this country a certain quantity of land. These proposals were eagerly embraced by numbers, who knew not the hardships of settling a new country. About thirty families, most of them Highlanders, allured by the prospect of owning a farm, bade adieu to the land of their nativity, and arrived at Pictou on the 15th September following. The Hector had been ill provided, so that eighteen died during the passage and were cast into the sea, and when she arrived there were some either dying or dead. The latter were buried on the beach, while the living were landed at Brown's point, without provisions, and left to provide shelter and food for themselves as best they might.

It being so late in the season when they arrived, of course no crop could be got into the ground that year. The Hector was immediately despatched to Philadelphia to bring back a supply of provisions. But by the time she returned, the settlers having found that the Philadelphia grant, which they had come to settle, extended far into the interior with only a small frontage on the shore, and that occupied by those who had previously arrived, they refused to occupy it. They were afraid of Indians and wild beasts, and besides, unprovided as they

were with compasses, they were liable to be lost in the woods, and they were shut out from what they soon saw must for a time prove their principal dependance for subsistence, the fish in the harbour and rivers. When the Hector returned, and it was found that they had refused to settle the company's grant, the provisions were refused. A jealousy also arose between them and the American settlers, so that the latter did not so readily render the assistance, which they might have done under other circumstances. A dispute also arose between Ross and the company. They refused his demands, and soon after he abandoned the passengers he had brought out, so that they were left without food, and entirely destitute of means to provide for themselves. And even difficulties were thrown in the way of their getting their grants, and being unaccustomed to hunting they were reduced to great distress. Most of them moved away to Truro, or places adjacent, and some even to Halifax and Windsor, to obtain by their labour the necessary means of support for their families. Some went that season, but others not till afterward. Those who remained had only rude camps to shelter themselves and their families, during the winter, of the inclemency of which they had previously no conception. To obtain food for their families, they had to proceed to Truro through a trackless forest and in deep snow, and there obtaining a bushel or two of potatoes and sometimes a little flour, in exchange for their labour, they had to return carrying their small supply on their backs, or in winter dragging it on hand sleds through snow, sometimes three or four feet deep.

Those who remained got on pretty well the two following seasons. Timber of the best quality abounded, and American vessels came in which supplied them with necessaries in exchange for staves, shingles, &c. And they were beginning to surmount their difficulties, when the American Revolutionary war broke out, and this branch of trade being stopped, they were cut off from all supplies from abroad. Even salt could not be obtained except by boiling down sea water, and in summer

the settlers might be seen in fine weather, spending days at the shore preparing their winter's supply.

The breaking out of the American war increased the jealousy between them and the American settlers. The Scotch were decided loyalists, while those who had come from Philadelphia, as well as most of the inhabitants of Truro and the adjacent settlements, had a very warm sympathy with the Americans. A number of the former, joined by reinforcements from Truro, seized a valuable vessel belonging to Captain Lowden, then loading in the harbour, and started off to join the Americans, who then had possession of the country about Bay Verte. On one occasion at least they were in danger from the Americans. Two American armed vessels, probably the same which plundered Charlotte Town and carried off the President administering the government, appeared off the entrance of the harbour threatening to plunder the people. But one of the first settlers named Horton went on board, and represented that there were only a few poor Scotch people there just commencing a settlement, and having nothing worth taking away. Through his persuasion they left them unmolested.

We cannot give the names of all the passengers by the ship Hector, but their descendants embrace a large proportion of the inhabitants of Pictou, such as the MacKays and Frasers, of the East River, the MacKenzies, MacLeods, MacDonalds, Mathesons, Camerons, and Frasers, of West River and Loch Broom, and the Douglasses, MacDonalds, and Frasers, of Middle River.

These settlers had scarcely surmounted the first difficulties of their settlement, when they were again plunged into difficulties by the influx of a class in poorer circumstances than themselves. These were a body of emigrants, who had been sent out from Dumfriesshire by one of the proprietors of Prince Edward Island to settle his land. They landed at Three Rivers, part of them in the year 1774, and part of them in the following year, and were left in a state of almost entire destitution. They continued there about eighteen months, and I have heard

the most affecting tales of the sufferings they endured. In summer their principal means of subsistence was the shell-fish, which they gathered on the shore. They sowed seed, but the crop, even the potatoes planted were devoured by mice. In winter they were reduced to the very verge of starvation. Their principal source of relief was a settlement of French people some miles distant. From them they received supplies, principally of potatoes, in exchange for the clothes they had brought with them from Scotland, until they scarcely retained sufficient to cover themselves decently. From want of food the men became reduced to such a state of weakness, and the snow was so deep, that they were scarcely able to carry back provisions for their families; and when with slow steps and heavy labour they brought them home, such had been the state in which they had left the children, that they trembled to enter their dwellings, lest they should find them dead, and sometimes waited at the door listening for any sound, that might indicate that they were yet alive.

Having heard that there was food in Pictou, they despatched one of their number to enquire into the prospects there. His report was on the whole so favourable, that fifteen families immediately removed over. They arrived in almost entire destitution, and though the Highlanders received them with all the kindness in their power, yet their supplies were quite inadequate to meet such an influx, and were soon consumed. The result was a great aggravation of their hardships. An aged female in my congregation recollects that for two or three months in summer after the seed was committed to the ground, she and other children were obliged to live on berries and nettles. They were sent to the woods during part of the day to gather wild fruits, and the only other meal consisted of nettles boiled to form a sort of greens;* and the late Andrew Mar-

* "In spring the common people in some parts of Scotland prepare a soup from the young tops of the common nettle, which are tender at that season. This dish is referred to by Andrew Fairservice in Rob Roy, 'Nae doubt I suld understand my ain trade of horticulture, seeing I was bred in the parish

shall used to tell that his father had actually beaten him for refusing to eat beech leaves boiled, which he would not do for the simple reason that his stomach refused them. Though these people arrived in such destitution, they were among the most valuable of the early settlers of Pictou, and their descendants to this day, both in the church and in civil society, are among the most respectable members of the community. They embrace the MacLeans, Smiths, MacLellans, Blaikies, Clarks, Marshalls, Cultons, Brydones, Crocketts, Turnbulls, &c.

The circumstances of the settlers however soon improved. By cutting the timber and burning it on the land, which however could only be done with great labour, they were enabled to sow wheat and plant potatoes among the stumps, and covering them with the hoe, they derived from them a plentiful return. They learned too to hunt moose, by which means they had a supply of meat for the winter—to make sugar from the juice of the maple, and to catch the fish which abounded in the harbours and rivers. They were still however at a loss for British goods, but in the year 1779, John Patterson, afterward known as Deacon Patterson, went to Scotland and brought out a supply, and afterward continued to trade, taking wheat from the people in exchange for British merchandise.

The next accession to the settlers was at the peace with the United States in 1783. A large number of disbanded soldiers who had served in the war arrived in the fall of that year, and in the following spring. They had received a large grant of land, still called the 82nd Grant, embracing Fisher's Grant, and extending eastward to Merigormish, and were to receive rations of food for some time. But the habits of the army ill fitted them for the work of clearing the forest, or for any employment requiring industry and perseverance. A number of them were Highland Catholics from the island of Barra, very ignorant. These, drawn together by the ties of religion and clanship, moved farther east along the gulf shore. There

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of Dreepdaily near Glasco, where they raise lang kail under glass, and force the early nettles for their spring kail.'"—Chambers' Journal.

would probably be fifty of them remaining when Dr. MacGregor came. Most of them were idle and profligate, but a few were sober and industrious, and their descendants are among the most respectable members of the community. Among these may be mentioned the Carmichaels, Iveses, Ballantynes of Cape George, Smiths, Simpsons, and MacDonalds of Merigomish, &c.

In the latter summer there arrived a small band of Highlanders, who had also served in the American war. They had just arrived at New York, when the war commenced. Orders had been sent out by the Home Government to raise a regiment among the emigrants from Britain to serve "until the present unnatural rebellion be suppressed," with the promise, in addition to regular pay, of 200 acres of land at the close of the war, and 50 acres additional for each child. They were induced partly by threats and partly by persuasion to enlist in the regiment thus raised, which was called the 84th Royal Highland Emigrants. Having served during the war, most of them obtained their land on Nine Mile River and Kennetcook, but a few obtained theirs on the upper settlement of the East River of Pictou. These were very steady, industrious settlers, and their descendants embrace the Grants, MacDonalds, Chisholms, MacMillans, MacNaughtons, Camerons, and Forbeses of that quarter.

During that summer (1784) a few families of Highlanders, who with a number of others had arrived at Halifax, removed to Pictou, and settled on the East River. The most noteworthy of these were Thomas Fraser and Simon Fraser, who had been elders in the parish of Kirkhill, and who will be noticed hereafter.

Such were the settlers of Pictou previous to Dr. MacGregor's arrival, and we must now notice briefly their social and moral condition. We need scarcely say that they were still very poor. The following was the general construction of their huts: The sides and ends were composed of logs, generally in their round state, laid upon one another, with moss stuffed be-

tween them, while the roof was formed of the bark of trees, cut in pieces of equal length, disposed in regular tiers, the ends and the edges overlapping, and kept in their places by poles running the whole length of the building, placed on the ends of each range of bark, and fastened at the ends of the building by withs. Except in dimensions they might answer the description given by the Poet of Ellen's bower:

> "It was a lodge of ample size,
> But strange of structure and device,
> Of such materials as around,
> The workman's hand had readiest found.
> Lopped of their boughs, their hoar trunks bared
> And by the hatchet rudely squared,
> To give the walls their destined height
> The sturdy oak and ash unite;
> While moss, and clay, and leaves combined,
> To fence each crevice from the wind;
> The lighter pine trees overhead,
> Their slender length for rafters spread;
> And withered heath and rushes dry,
> Supplied a russet canopy."

Our readers at a distance however must not suppose that in the reality such a building possessed the charms with which it is invested in the imagination of the poet. Their furniture was of the rudest description, frequently a block of wood or a rude bench, made out of a slab, in which four sticks had been inserted as legs, served for chair or table. Their food was commonly served up in wooden dishes or in wooden plates, and eaten with wooden spoons, except when, discarding such interventions, they adopted the more direct method of gathering round the pot of potatoes on the floor. And among the new comers at least, a little straw formed the only bed. Money was scarcely seen, and almost all trade was done by barter; wheat, and maple sugar, being the principal circulating medium.

They were also very ignorant. Few of the Highlanders could read. Of course there were but few books among them. In general they were particularly ignorant in regard to religion.

Of the first settlers, the Harrises and Squire Patterson were Presbyterians, the father of the former being from the north of Ireland, and the latter from Scotland, and they as well as others maintained a respect for the duties of religion. Among the Highlanders some were decidedly pious, of whom Colin Douglass and Kenneth Fraser are especially worthy of notice, but among the rest the state of religion was very low. So little did a number of them know or care about the subject, that we have heard it said, that if a clever priest had come here at the time that Dr. MacGregor did, the one half would have become Roman Catholics. An individual still living, told the writer, that at the first funeral he ever attended, being that of a child, the father, a nominal Protestant and Presbyterian too, as soon as the grave was completed, kneeled down at the foot and commenced praying for the departed. And I have heard of a father and mother kneeling down, the one at the head and the other at the foot of their child's grave, to pray for it. It is even said that some of them were in the habit of praying to the Virgin Mary. The settlers from Dumfriesshire were however more intelligent and much better instructed in religious matters.

Until Dr. MacGregor's arrival, they had never enjoyed the regular ministrations of the gospel. They were not however without the means of grace. In the petition from Pictou for a minister it is said, that "the Philadelphia company made provision for and sent a minister, viz., the Rev. James Lyon, at the first settlement, yet he did not continue among us, which very much discouraged the people, and was exceedingly detrimental to the settling of the place." Mr. Lyon was one of the proprietors of the Philadelphia company. How long he remained in Pictou we have not been able to ascertain. From the records of the Presbytery of New Brunswick, New Jersey, by which he was ordained, it appears that he was in the Province in the year 1772, and that the Presbytery corresponded with him till that date. Wherever he laboured, it was not in Pictou, where the only memorial of his presence is the name

Lyon's Brook, still given to a small stream about three miles from the town of Pictou, on the side of which he had taken up land.

The pious settlers however, in the absence of a minister, put forth their best efforts to maintain religion among themselves, and to impress it upon the rising generation. Among the first settlers was one named James Davidson, who was instrumental in doing much good. Even before the arrival of the Hector's passengers, he gathered the young for religious instruction on the Sabbath day, at Lyon's Brook. This was the first Sabbath-school in the county of Pictou, and I think I may safely say in the Province, and was established some time before Raikes commenced that movement, which has rendered these institutions every where a part of the machinery of the Christian Church.

The Scottish settlers, too, were not unmindful of the lessons of their native land. They were accustomed to assemble on the Sabbath day for religious worship, Robert Marshall holding what the Highlanders call "a reading" in English, and Colin Douglass in Gaelic. The exercises at these meetings consisted of praise and prayer, and especially, as their name indicated, reading the Scriptures and religious works. Marshall was a man of great theological information, and good gifts. Douglass had not the same gifts, but he was one of the few among the Highlanders who could read tolerably well. But there were scarcely any books in Gaelic, and as the old people among the Highlanders understood no English, they were under great disadvantages. The books in English were also few. Even those that the Dumfries people had brought out with them had been mostly consumed by the mice in Prince Edward Island. The few they possessed were well used. An imperfect copy of Boston's Fourfold State did good service. An old man, still living at the age of eighty-eight, dates back some of his earliest religious impressions to the reading of it, and retains such a feeling of veneration for the work as to regard it as next to the Bible the best book ever produced. Of these meetings we cannot help thinking, that they realized the divine word: "Then

they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name."

A larger supply of books was obtained after the late John Patterson visited Scotland in 1779. He had before leaving Scotland built a number of small cottages on what was called a thirty-nine year tack, at Quarrelltown, in the neighbourhood of Paisley his native town, and during his absence the rents had accumulated to about £80. This he invested partly in goods, but principally in books. Returning by way of New York he bought a large supply of the New England Primer. Blessed book! In how many youthful minds hast thou sowed the seeds of heavenly truth! Young as we are, we too have tender recollections of thee. Thy very shape and appearance was peculiar. Thy form was square, a figure well chosen to represent perfection. Thy paper was dark in colour and somewhat dingy in appearance, as well beseemed the modest humility of thy character. We have seen thee since in perfectly white paper, in shape like an ordinary catechism, with bright red cover—Pah! thou art not the Primer of our youth. As well present to us John Knox in the picture of a modern dandy, with Joinville necktie, or his renowned daughter Mrs. Welsh, in hoops and crinoline. Then thy frontispiece with the picture of John Rogers perishing in the flames, while his wife and ten children were standing by. Did ever work in gallery of Fine Arts excite more attention and study, and influence a greater number of minds for good, impressing upon them the principles of religious liberty, and instilling into them the martyr spirit of Christianity, than did that same old wood cut? Then its contents, how did we go through its alphabet with two lines of rhyme and an illustrative picture for each letter, beginning at that foundation truth of theology,

In Adam's fall
We sinned all,

and leading us on from A to Z, till our attention was directed to a little man just appearing amid the umbrageous foliage of a tree, and we read the mellifluous lines,

Zaccheus he
Did climb the tree
His Lord to see!

And then the Shorter Catechism,—But we must stop. O New England! where hast thou been drifting in thy morals and theology, since that primer has gone from thy schools and thy households, even as the glory from Israel!

But to our narrative. These were distributed gratuitously among the young; all that was required of them being that they should learn the contents, which they did very rapidly.

They also received occasional ministerial service. As early as the year 1780, and probably before, they were visited by the Rev. Daniel Cock and the Rev. David Smith. For several summers previous to Dr. MacGregor's arrival, one of them, but most frequently Mr. Cock, visited them, preaching for a week or two in private houses or in the open air, and baptizing children. The people deemed it absolutely necessary to attend to this last service. Hence even the Highlanders got their children baptized, although sometimes they scarcely understood a single word that the minister said. Indeed the people considered themselves under Mr. Cock's charge, and a number of them used to travel to Truro to attend his sacraments, and in some instances parents carried their children over to be baptized.

They also received some visits from stragglers. The renowned Henry Alline visited them. In his journal he says, under date July 25th, 1782, "Got to a place called *Picto*, where I had no thought of making any stay, but finding the Spirit to attend my preaching I staid there thirteen days, and preached in all the different parts of the settlement. I found *four Christians* in this place, who were greatly revived and rejoiced that the gospel was sent among them." He preached at Alexander

Fraser's at the lower end of the Middle River, in William MacKay's barn on the East River, and his last sermon was preached at the head of the harbour. On that occasion he got some of the most intelligent of the Highlanders to translate into Gaelic. There were also some Indians present whom he addressed in French. He had a very free and sociable turn with him in private, his conversation being distinguished by readiness in quoting Scripture, and his manner was very engaging. A number of the people were taken with him, and two or three particularly so. He did not broach any of his peculiar views. Some of the old people however were dubious about him. Colin Douglass, at parting from him, said, "I am not very sure about you; I like what you say very well, but you did not come in by the door," alluding to the irregular mode of his entering the ministry. "Oh," replied Alline, "I had no opportunity of coming in any other way than by the window. But you just follow me as far as I follow Christ." Robert Marshall, on bidding him farewell, said, "If you are a true minister of Christ, may the Lord prosper you, and if you are not, I hope that we may never see your face again." After his departure Mr. Cock visited them to warn them against him. He asked Colin Douglass what he thought of Mr. A's preaching. He replied, that what he understood, he liked very well, but some of what he said he did not understand, which he attributed to his own ignorance (an exhibition of wisdom not common among hearers of the gospel in our day). "Oh," said Mr. Cock, "that is just the way he would act with you. If he wanted to drown you he would not take you into a deep place at first. He would take you in where the water was only to the knees, and afterward take you in deeper until finally he would souse you overhead." As an example of the poverty of some of the first settlers at that time, it may be mentioned that Robert Marshall borrowed Colin Douglass's coat to hear him one day, while Colin wore it himself on the next. Alline, hearing of his circumstances, took off his own coat, and gave him his vest.

They were also visited by the Rev. James Fraser, who had

been a chaplain in the army during the American war, and who had laboured for some time at Onslow. He was but an indifferent character, and afterward moved to Miramichi.

But there was a strong desire to have the services of a settled minister. A meeting was accordingly held in the summer of 1784, at which it was resolved to endeavour to obtain the services of a minister for themselves. For this purpose they engaged to pay annually the sum of £80, for the first two years, £90 for the two succeeding years, and £100 afterward, which they agreed to increase as their means enabled them, besides paying his passage out. A committee was appointed to send to Scotland a petition for a minister. Their petition, which was drawn up by Mr. Cock, is given in the Appendix, and the result, as already described, was the securing the services of Dr. MacGregor.

This account of the early social and moral condition of Pictou, though it may be deemed by some unnecessary to our work, will, we believe, assist in giving the reader some idea of the scene of the Doctor's labours at the time of his entering upon it. We shall return to his own narrative in our next chapter.

CHAPTER V.

JOURNEY TO PICTOU AND FIRST PREACHING THERE 1786.

"What manner of entering in we had unto you."—1 Thess. i. 9.

"On Thursday, 13th (July,) a farmer from Truro, one of Mr. Cock's hearers, offered, if I would start next day, to accompany me through the woods to Truro, which would be sixty miles of the hundred to Pictou. I hired a horse, and we set off on Friday afternoon on a good road, but a miserably rocky soil. About eleven miles from Halifax the road grew worse, but the woods became gradually better, till their beauty, strength, and loftiness far surpassed any thing of the kind I had ever seen in the Highlands. I imagined myself riding through the policies of a Scottish duke; but the policies of no Scottish duke can compare in grandeur with the forests of Nova Scotia. After riding two or three miles through this beautiful scene, I began to look for a house, but no house, great or small, appeared; till after we had ridden eight miles more, there appeared a small clearing in rocky land, where, after supping upon good bread, fish, and bohea tea, we lodged for the night. Thenceforth we had no road. A narrow avenue had been cut down indeed, and some of the trunks, cut across, and rolled a little out of the way, but many of them lay as they fell, and none of the stumps or roots were removed.

"In proportion as the land became less rocky, and in every place where it was wet, the horses had to wade nearly to the knees, and often far above them, in mud or water, and the one horse behoved to put his foot in the very spots where the other

before him put his. Next morning we rode eight miles before we breakfasted, which we did on fish, bread, and tea: then with great exertion and fatigue (to me) eighteen miles to dinner, which again was composed of bread, fish, and tea. I was very thankful for our safety, as the greatest part of the road was both difficult and dangerous, on account of the many swamps full of roots and logs, which we had to pass. I was attentive to direct the horse as dexterously as possible, and keep a good bridle hand, and often ascribed the safety of both to my cautious management. But at last we came to a place so apparently dangerous, that it seemed quite impossible to escape without broken bones. There was no way to get to a side, or to go back, and the horse was in such haste to get on, that he did not allow time to think. I threw the bridle upon his neck in perfect despair. How amazed was I to find myself completely delivered from the great danger in a few seconds by the sagacity of a mere beast! This incident was of great use to me afterwards, by inspiring me with perfect confidence in the horses reared in the forest here. Toward evening we came to the river Stewiacke, where there was a considerable clearing on the side of the river, and the soil very fertile. It is called *intervale* in Nova Scotia, and *haugh* or *dale* in Scotland.

"The river was small, though still and deep; and seeing neither boat nor bridge, I thought only of swimming across it, but my companion showed me a trough on the edge of the river on the other side, told me that it was one of the canoes of Nova Scotia, and that it would carry us over in safety. Perceiving a man mowing hay at some distance, on the same side of the river with the canoe, my fellow-traveller called aloud to him. He understood that we wanted a passage, at once threw aside his scythe, and on reaching the river turned the canoe upon its side, to empty it of some water which it had leaked, launched it, and quickly paddled it over to us. He directed us to take the saddles off our horses, and helped us to drive them into the river, to swim across. Putting my saddle in the bottom of the canoe, he desired me to sit down upon it; I did

so, and he ferried me across quickly and safely, and afterwards my companion in the same manner. These operations being new to me, I observed them with no small degree of curiosity. The man was dressed in a home made check or woollen shirt, and striped trousers, without hat, handkerchief, or stocking. I admired his dress, as the best I had seen for labourers in hot weather, which was now the case in a high degree. He accompanied us to his house, put our horses to pasture, and lodged us hospitably. Here again we supped on bread, fish, and tea, so that I began to conclude that there were no other eatables in Nova Scotia. Upon inquiry, I was told that the country people could not afford meat, as it kept fresh for only a very short time in such hot weather; but that fish could be had at any time, as almost every house stood beside a stream, and the fish were plentiful in proportion to the scarcity of the inhabitants. We had passed three houses only during the whole day, and each was by a stream. I was also told that they caught fish in winter, when the ice was a foot thick, as well as in summer, merely by cutting a hole through the ice, and letting down a baited hook. The fish, seeing the light by the hole, come to it immediately, and bite readily. It was said, moreover, to be common for country people to keep beef, moose meat, and caribou meat (I suppose the same as the elk and reindeer) fresh, in the snow, for three months.

"The house in which we lodged consisted of a kitchen and two or three bed-closets, with a garret for lumber, and a sleeping-place for some of the children. We all sat in the kitchen, and here I had an opportunity of seeing how the country women prepared their bread. After kneading the dough, the landlady formed it into a beautiful large cake of an oval form, nearly an inch thick, swept a hot part of the hearth clean, and there laid it flat. She then spread over it a thin layer of fine cold ashes, and over that a thick layer of hot ashes, mixed with burning coals. By the time the tea-kettle boiled, the bread was baked. The landlady with a fire-shovel removed the ashes, and took it off the hearth; and then, after a little

agitation to shake off the ashes, she wiped it with a cloth, much cleaner than I could have expected when it was laid down. It made very good and agreeable bread. It seems this was the way of baking bread in the days of Abraham, (Gen. xviii. 6.) It is a speedy way; and, though not clean, still not so foul as a stranger would imagine. Some cover the cake with paper when it is laid upon the hearth, which keeps it perfectly clean, but this is not a common mode. Our host, I suppose, kept up family worship, for the Bible was at hand, and laid it on the table after supper, which I had seen done before.

"My companion roused me pretty early next morning, which was Sabbath, intending to be at Truro to attend public worship. I did not relish the idea of travelling on the Lord's day, but could not persuade him to stay; and, having found him extremely useful, I thought it a work of necessity to accompany him. When we went to the pasture to saddle our horses, his was not to be found. We sought for it a long time, but in vain. I then proposed to stay where we were till next day. Truro was but fourteen miles off, and we might still be in time for sermon, had the road been tolerable; but it was no better than what we had travelled already. He replied that we could be at Truro in time for the afternoon service; that doubtless his horse was moving slowly homeward, eating as he went, and that probably we would overtake him after travelling a mile or two. So saying, he took his saddle and bridle on his own back, and invited me to come along with him. I obeyed, as I could not think either of travelling alone, or waiting till chance would bring forward another traveller, which might not be for a number of days. We overtook the horse, as he expected, and reached Truro by the time the afternoon's service was to begin; but I was so fatigued as to be fit for nothing but rest.

"On Monday, I went to pay my respects to the Rev. Daniel Cock, the minister of Truro; a man of warm piety, kind manners, and primitive simplicity. He received me with great kindness; but when we came to speak of uniting, as members of the same presbytery, he was disappointed, and a little cha-

grined at my refusal. He was the more disappointed, as he was the writer of the petition which the Pictou people sent home, and never had doubted but that the person it would bring out would sit in presbytery with him; besides, he had given most supply of sermon and other ordinances to the Pictou people previous to my arrival. He accompanied me next day to Londonderry, fifteen miles down the Bay of Fundy, to visit the Rev. David Smith, then minister of that place. He was a man of more learning and penetration, but less amiable, than Mr. Cock. His untoward disposition had alienated a great part of the congregation from him. He proposed several judicious considerations to induce me to join the presbytery; but at that time they had no influence upon me. I believe that every honest Scottish emigrant that goes abroad, carries with him a conscientious attachment to the peculiarities of his profession, which nothing but time and a particular acquaintance with the country he goes to will enable him to lay aside. It may be so with more than Scotchmen: it was so with me. They both informed me that their presbytery was to meet that day two weeks, and proposed to me to come to the presbytery, to preach to it, and to converse with the members about the point in question. To all these things I agreed. Mr. Cock and I lodged with Mr. Smith that night, and next day we returned to Truro.

"I understood that two gentlemen of Truro intended to go to Pictou on Friday; therefore I waited willingly for their company. Till this time there had been no road from Truro to Pictou but a blaze; that is, a chip taken off every tree, in the direction which the road should have, to help the traveller to keep straight on: but a number of Pictou Highlanders were now cutting down the trees where the road was intended to be; for the Government had voted money to open it. My companions had taken with them a small flask full of rum and a ham of lamb, to refresh us by the way, as it was too far to travel fasting, and there was no public house. Just as we thought it time to take our snack, we came to a place where

there was a patch of good grass, and a boiling pot hung on sticks, laid on two forked sticks stuck in the ground. Here we took our snack. The ham rather more than sufficing us, we agreed to put the bones and the remaining meat into the pot, that the roadmen might get the good of them. We then took each a mouthful out of the flask, and mounted our horses. By-and-by we met two men on foot going toward Truro, and coming to the roadmen, I told them in Gaelic that I was the minister expected to Pictou. They all came and shook hands with me, and welcomed me cordially.*

"It was well for my companions and me that the two men went along, otherwise we stood fair for a good threshing. The Highlanders went by-and-by to their dinner, and finding the meat and bones in the pot, were exasperated to the highest degree against those who did it, and vowed revenge, imagining that it was done purely to insult them. As it could not, in their opinion, be done by any of the decent gentlemen who went to Pictou, it must have been done by the two footmen who went to Truro. They were so persuaded of this, that the two most fiery of them set off after them to give them a drubbing; but having pursued them three or four miles without overtaking them, they returned—not forgetting, however, to publish that, if ever they came to Pictou, they might expect broken bones. I took occasion, when they returned home, after finishing their job on the road, to inform them who put the meat and bones into the pot, and from what motive it was done. They were satisfied; but I saw it needful to caution them against such rashness hereafter.†

* The overseer was James MacDonald, afterward an elder, and long one of his most intimate companions and steadfast supporters, who died in the year 1857 at the age of over 100 years. He used to tell that he was the first man to welcome Dr. MacGregor to Pictou. When far in his dotage, describing the scene to us, when the Doctor came forward, and told them that he was the minister for Pictou, he said, "Wasn't we rejoiced?" The opening of the road at this time, however, was only cutting down the trees along a narrow avenue, just wide enough for the passage of a single traveller. The stumps were not removed, neither was the ground levelled.

† This incident, trivial as it may appear, illustrates one feature of the char-

"Before night, we arrived at George MacConnell's, the nearest house to Truro.* This road was better than the road between Pictou and Halifax; for as few horses had ever passed on it, the surface was not broken nor cut into holes, like the other. I had a hearty welcome from George; but as there was only one apartment in his house, he took me over, for lodging, to his next neighbour's, William Smith, in whose house there was a sort of two. I had now arrived within the bounds of my congregation, and had a sample of it; but the sample was better than the stock. William Smith was an active, public spirited man; but he did not live long, and his death was to me the death of half the congregation. Having asked Smith where it would be most proper to have sermon on Sabbath, he answered at Squire Patterson's, which was ten miles off, one half of which must be travelled by land and the other by water. I requested him to give notice of it as widely as possible. He said he would; and did it so effectually, that they came to the sermon from every corner in Pictou, except the upper settlement of the East River.

"Next morning, I moved down the West River toward the harbour and Squire Patterson's. William Smith accompanied me past two or three of the houses, at which we called, and delivered me to Hugh Fraser, afterward an elder, who engaged to see me safe at Squire Patterson's. We called at the remaining houses down the West River, then travelled three miles without a house, when the harbour appeared—a beautiful sheet of water, very much like one of the Highland lakes in Scotland, about nine miles long and one broad. It is an excellent harbour, but its entrance is rather narrow. Three rivers run

acter of the inhabitants of Nova Scotia, and probably of all new countries, compared with those of older ones. In the latter, a person would consider himself as doing a favour to a body of labourers, or any poor people, by giving them the remains of his feast; but where the necessaries of life are so abundant as in Nova Scotia, there is no class of the community to whom the offering of such would not be apt to be considered somewhat in the light of an insult, in the same way as it was by these Highlanders.

* This was about ten miles from Pictou.

into it. The West River falls into the west end or head of it; and the Middle and East River into the south side of it. The rivers are small, none of them having a run of thirty miles; but the East River is as large as the other two, and is often called by the Highlanders the Great River. The greatest detriment it sustains is by its freezing for three or four months in winter, so that no vessel can come in or go out. When I looked round the shores of the harbour, I was greatly disappointed and cast down, for there was scarcely any thing to be seen but woods growing down to the water's edge. Here and there a mean timber hut was visible in a small clearing, which appeared no bigger than a garden compared to the woods. Nowhere could I see two houses without some wood between them. I asked Hugh Fraser, 'Where is the town?' He replied, 'There is no town but what you see.' The petition sent home had the word *township* in it, whence I had foolishly inferred that there was a town in Pictou. The reader may have some conception of my disappointments, when he is informed that I had inferred also the existence of many comforts in the town, and among them a barber, for I had never been partial to the operation of shaving. My disappointments were immensely discouraging to me; for I looked on myself as an exile from the Church and society. I saw that Nova Scotia, and especially Pictou, was very far behind the idea which I had formed of them. I renounced at once all idea of ever seeing a town in Pictou. Nothing but necessity kept me there; for I durst not think of encountering the dangerous road to Halifax again, and there was no vessel in Pictou to take me away, and even had there been one, I had not money to pay my passage home.

"Hugh Fraser, having borrowed a canoe, paddled me along, with a good deal of labour, to Squire Patterson's,* but it was much nearer than going by land. I was received by the squire

* The residence of this gentleman, where Dr. MacGregor preached his first sermon in Pictou, was a little above Norway House, and less than a mile above the place where the town of Pictou now stands, which was then, to a considerable extent, covered with the primeval forest.

and his lady with every mark of the most sincere kindness. They were of the very first settlers of Pictou, and had all along maintained a Christian character; and now rejoiced in the prospect of enjoying public ordinances, of which they had been long deprived. The afternoon I spent partly in preparation for the morrow, and partly in getting accounts of the state and people of Pictou. The first settlers of Pictou were about a dozen families from Maryland, in the year 1765.* In 1773, came the ship *Hector*, loaded with Highlanders from Lochbroom, sent out by the Philadelphia Company, to settle a large grant of theirs in Pictou. But many of them left Pictou for Truro, Onslow, and Londonderry, townships in Colchester; for the families who had been in Pictou before could not afford winter provision for a third part of them; but they almost all returned after some years. Many of these settlers suffered incredible hardships in bringing provisions from Colchester, without roads, horses, or money, but earning them by hard labour. One or two years afterwards there arrived about fifteen families, emigrants from Dumfriesshire to St. John, now Prince Edward Island, who had been almost starved to death there, and gladly exchanged total want for the scanty allowance of Pictou. In the fall of 1783, and spring of 1784, came about twenty families of soldiers, mostly Highlanders, who had been disbanded after the peace with the United States in 1783, and some of their officers having half-pay. The same summer brought eight families of Highlanders by the way of Halifax. There were a few of the families Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, &c.; but they were mostly Scotchmen and Presbyterians. They were settled round the shores of the harbour, and on the sides of the rivers, except two families on the East River, and one on the West, who chose to go two miles for the sake of better land. Such was the account I had from Squire Patterson† of the first

* This should be 1767. The grant was obtained in 1765, but the settlers did not arrive till two years later.

† To our American readers it will not be necessary to explain, that the title "Esquire" given to justices of the peace, is commonly corrupted into "Squire,"

settlement of Pictou. His own house was rather the best in Pictou, and the only framed one. There were only seven or eight log houses in the whole settlement that had two fire-places.

"The squire gave orders to lay slabs and planks in his barn for seats to the congregation; and before eleven o'clock next morning I saw the people gathering to hear the gospel from the lips of a stranger, and a stranger who felt few of its consolations in his own soul, and had but little hope of communicating them to his hearers. None came by land, except certain families who lived a few miles to the right and left of Squire Patterson's. Those who came from the south side of the harbour, and from the rivers, had to come in boats or canoes; and I doubt not but all the craft in Pictou available at the time was in requisition. It was truly a novel sight to me, to see so many boats and canoes carrying people to sermon. There were only five or six boats, but many canoes, containing from one to seven or eight persons. The congregation, however, was not large; for numbers could not get ready their craft, the notice was so short. I observed that the conduct of some of them, coming from the shore to the barn, was as if they had never heard of a Sabbath. I heard loud talking and laughing, and singing and whistling, even before they reached the shore. They behaved, however, with decency so long as I continued to speak, and some of them were evidently much affected. I endeavoured to explain to them in the forenoon, in English, 'This

and that where, as is frequently the case, the principal magisterial business in a village or settlement is done by one, he usually goes by the name of "*the* Squire." This gentleman has been styled the father of Pictou. The principal part of the public business of the place for years after its first settlement, even to the solemnization of marriages, was transacted by him. He was originally from Scotland, whence he had emigrated to the United States, and came to Pictou with the first settlers. He had a pleasant manner, much kindness of heart, and was much liked by the people generally. His descendants are numerous, and several of them have filled most respectable situations; one grandson and one great-grandson being devoted ministers of the gospel, and two sons as well as some of his grandsons having been or being now elders of the church.

is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;' and in the afternoon, in Gaelic, 'The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.' I had been afraid of the want of proper precentors, especially for the Gaelic, as I knew in Scotland that readers were scarce in the North Highlands; but I was happily disappointed, for William Smith did very well in English, and Thomas Fraser in Gaelic. The first words which I heard after pronouncing the blessing, were from a gentleman of the army calling to his companions, 'Come, come, let us go to the grog-shop;* but instead of going with him, they came toward me, to bid me welcome to the settlement; and he came himself at last. I could not be displeased with their politeness; still there was no savour of piety in their talk. There were a number of pious persons there, who would gladly have spoken to me; but, as they told me afterwards, they had not the courage to show themselves in such company; by which means I had a worse opinion of the place than it deserved. The gentlemen stayed some time; and while they did, we had little else among us but profanation of the Sabbath. Perhaps I was too timid myself; for all that I did to repress this profanation was some faint attempts to turn the talk into a more profitable channel. It soon turned back. When they were gone, Squire Patterson's family offered no hindrance to religious conversation."

It may be remarked here, as we shall have occasion to notice more particularly hereafter, that he had a remarkable talent for directing conversation into religious channels. In company, whatever subject was started, he almost instantly gave a religious turn to it, and that so naturally, as not only to give no offence to any, but to attract the attention of the thoughtless to the subject. This seldom failed to render his social intercourse the means of spiritual profit. To this source many owe their first impressions of divine things.

* This was a Dr. MacLean, the same who afterward seemed to have become penitent.

At this point in the original MS., the following words occur inserted at a later period: "Mrs. MacMillan converted," as if he intended to mention some incident connected with her being brought to the knowledge of the truth. We may therefore give such information concerning her as we have been able to collect. Her mother had been a Roman Catholic, and if she had any religious opinion she was the same. She was not, however, very bigoted, for before Dr. MacGregor's arrival she attended Robert Marshall's "readings." What was the reason of the introduction of her name at this stage of the narrative, we know not, but think it probable that an impression was made upon her mind by his first sermon. A visit which he paid to her shortly after is traditionally mentioned as a chief cause of her conversion. She lived at the Narrows of the East river, and on his way up he called at her house. As he went in, the cat having misbehaved, he heard her giving utterance to some reprehensible language. He said nothing about it at first, but in a little turned the conversation to the subject, and mildly reproved her, saying that he would not have spoken in that way. Other conversations followed in which he completely won her affection, so that she never after had any thing to do with the Priests. She early became a member of the church, and was remarkable for her attachment to him, and for following his preaching to great distances. She could neither read nor write, but learned many of the Psalms in the Metrical version, as well as many chapters of the Bible, and the Shorter Catechism. Her descendants are numerous and respectable; a great-grandson being at present a member of the Provincial Assembly for the County of Pictou. Appended to one of his Gaelic MS. we have found the following curious documents:

"I request all my children, and my children's children to join together and aid one another in paying the expenses of printing Poems, if Providence provides an opportunity for so doing." M. M'M.

JAMES MACGREGOR, *Witness.* MARY MACMILLAN, *Her mark.*

When she died, she left all her little property to the British and Foreign Bible Society.

As we have given his impressions of Pictou when he first arrived, we may give the impressions formed in Pictou regarding him. Probably from being downcast at the dreary appearance of the place and the prospects before him, he did not at first impress them very favourably. They at first thought him dull, if not stupid. William Smith, already referred to, said to one of his neighbours, "I fear we have been disappointed in our minister; I don't think that he will do much good." The first sermon he preached materially altered his opinion, and his first remark on coming out to the same individual was, "Ah, he is better than I thought; I think he will do yet." On this first Sabbath's preaching some of the disbanded who attended, stood at some distance, and did not even take off their hats till towards the close of the sermon, when they drew near, and uncovered their heads.

"By Squire Patterson's direction I gave out sermon next Sabbath on the East River, at the head of the tide, and the second Sabbath on the harbour, a few miles up from Squire Patterson's; and the sermon continued alternately at these places for about two months, when the people agreed to have two meeting-houses—one on the west side of the East River, half a mile below the head of the tide, to accommodate boats; and the other on the east side of the West River, two miles below the head of the tide—alternate preaching to be at these places till winter, when a winter regulation should be made. These two places were ten or eleven miles apart, and there was no road to either.

"Towards the beginning of the week I went up the East River, to get acquainted with the people, and be near the place of preaching next Sabbath. Except two families, the whole population of the East River was from the Highlands. But few of them, or of those in other parts of Pictou, could read a word. Several people applied to me for baptism next Sabbath. I was in great difficulty with some of them, and not

then only, but often afterwards; and doubtless often erred, not knowing what to do with them, especially for their ignorance. To those whom I thought quite unfit, I advised delay for some time till they got more knowledge, and to come again and converse on the subject; telling them that it was far safer for them to wait till they were fit for it, than to receive it without the blessing of God. One of these thought fit to stand up in the congregation next Sabbath, and say, in a loud and angry voice, that I was good for nothing, and did not deserve the name of a minister, and that he would never pay me a shilling, as I refused to baptize his child. Some of those near him endeavoured to still him, but in vain, till he got out his blast. I was sorry to hear him, but said nothing. Some of the neighbours, in the course of the week, made him believe that he was liable to a heavy fine, and frightened him greatly; so that, lest I should take the law to him, he came and acknowledged his great pride and folly, and begged me to pardon him. I told him I had no thought of taking the law, and advised him to consider how he could escape the anger of God for such behaviour; that God's grace never produced such conduct as his, and that he needed to ask God's pardon for offending him, and troubling his people, and exposing himself."

In connection with this we may mention an occurrence that took place at this point, which was to him a severe trial. On the very first Sabbath after his arrival, two of the gentlemen of the army applied to him for baptism for their children. He demurred, not knowing the character of the men. They asserted their good character and appealed in corroboration of their testimony to John Fraser, who had been a captain in the Regiment, and who was now a magistrate. He corroborated their testimony. The Doctor yielded and baptized their children. During the week, however, he discovered that both the men had left wives in the old country, and that their children were the result of adulterous connection formed with other women here. Though he was innocent in what he had done, yet his tender conscience upbraided him as having profaned a holy or-

dinance. This and the deceit practised upon him by one in the highest station, added to the dreary circumstances of his position, so impressed his mind that one of my informants says, that he has seen him actually in tears about the matter. He spoke of it long after with deep sorrow. Among the applicants for the same privilege during the week following was Colin Douglass. The Doctor replied, "I do not know what to do, I have done a thing last Sabbath, that I will regret all my days." Mr. D. referred him to the different character of the other settlers and afforded such satisfactory evidence of his character, that the Doctor gave him the privilege sought.

"Ever since I accepted the Synod's appointment, I had been concerned lest I should find no elders in Pictou, and thus not have a regular session. It was, therefore, a great happiness to me, that I now heard of three on the East River, who had been ordained in Scotland, viz., Thomas Fraser, and Simon Fraser, who had officiated in the parish of Kirkhill with my late respected and dear friend, the Rev. Alexander Fraser; and Alexander Fraser, alias MacAndrew, from Kilmorack. It was an addition to this happiness, that, in obtaining acquaintance with them, I found them possessed of considerable knowledge, and pleasing appearances of piety. I was now relieved from my fears about a regular session; as nothing else was necessary to the exercise of their office here but the call of the congregation; which I hoped would be obtained in due time, if God prospered my labours."

While we honour his scrupulous conscientiousness in regard to the order of Christ's house, we do not think that there was reason for his difficulty. Whatever may be proper, where the church has been already established, we hold that as the apostles "ordained Elders in every city," where of course there could not have been already a constituted Eldership, and as Titus was commissioned in Crete, to "set in order the things that are wanting and ordain Elders in every city," so one regularly commissioned as an Evangelist had all the authority requisite for the ordination of Elders. Of these elders, Alexan-

der Fraser was an old man, and lived but a short time. Simon Fraser also did not long survive, but Thomas Fraser was one of his closest companions and firmest supports almost till his death.

"Next Sabbath I went by water from the East River to the place mentioned above, to preach. The boat was crowded with people, and notwithstanding all that I could do to restrain them, their tongues walked through the earth; at least the restraint continued but a short time, when some one would forget and break through. But when we drew near to the place of preaching, to which all the boats and canoes were pointing, the scene described before was completely renewed. Their singing and whistling, and laughing and bawling, filled my mind with amazement and perplexity. I took occasion to warn them of the sin and danger of such conduct, and exhorted them to consider by whose authority they were required to 'remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.' My warning and exhortation were not altogether thrown away; but there was not much reformation, till the gentlemen belonging to the army favoured us with their absence, which they did when sailing ceased to be a pleasure, by the coolness of the weather. As they were the main cause of the evil, when they retired, those who had been excited by them were easily restrained. On the return of summer there was a visible alteration for the better. In the meantime, however, I often thought that my sermons did more harm by occasioning profanation of the Sabbath, than good by communicating instruction."

The place where the third Sabbath's preaching took place was at the lower end of the Middle River at Mr. Alexander Fraser's, near where Mr. Samuel Fraser's house now stands. This was the site first chosen for a church, which it was supposed would accommodate all sections of the congregation. This idea was soon abandoned, and two churches were erected. It may be mentioned that in the partial intercourse he had had with the people during these two weeks, he had already won the hearts of many. Even children had become attached to him. The

following, simple as it is, will show this, as well as illustrate the kindness of his manner. On his way back from Truro* in company with Thomas Fraser, the elder, at the lower part of the Middle River he met four boys. He asked Fraser, "What boys are these?" "Oh, they are some of your congregation, and bad boys they are," was the reply. "Oh, that's because they have had no minister to teach them, but they will do better after this." He then spoke to them, asking each his name, and enquiring regarding their respective families, and telling them to come and hear him preach next Sabbath, and pay attention to what he said, and he was sure that they would hereafter be good boys. He talked in this kind way to them till he completely won their hearts, and they were all eagerness to hear him preach. The preaching took place under the shade of a large elm-tree, and they listened with intense interest. He at that time gained a place in their affections which he never lost. One of these boys, who related the circumstance, was John Douglass, so well known through the church as Deacon Douglass.

"As I had not yet seen the Middle River, I took an opportunity of visiting it this week. It is the smallest of the rivers, and had only eleven families on it—four of them emigrants from Dumfries, the rest Highlanders. Here I became acquainted with Robert Marshall, a man worthy of being had in everlasting remembrance. He and his family suffered every thing but death in Prince Edward Island, by hunger and nakedness; for though they had plenty of clothes of all kinds when they came there, he had to part with every article of them that could possibly be spared for provision. Soon after he came to Pictou, he lost a most amiable consort, and for some time had a great struggle to bring up his family; but he was filled with the joy and peace of believing, and abounded in hope, not only of everlasting happiness, but of hearing the joyful sound of the gospel in Pictou. He was afterwards an elder, and a great comfort to me; but for

* His visit to Truro took place the week previous, and not the week after as recorded by him.

many a day he had to go to hear sermon in an old red coat which an old soldier had given him, and a weaver's apron, to hide the holes and rags of his trousers. He had, I believe, the poorest hut in Pictou; but many a happy night did I enjoy in it. Robert Marshall was eminent for honesty and plainness, for charity, liberality of sentiments, and public spirit. He was very useful to the young generation, teaching, and warning, and directing them; and he would reprove the greatest man in the province as readily as the least, for any plain violation of the law, as profane swearing, or travelling on the Sabbath. In time he got over his poverty; but he had his trials as well as his comforts all his days.

"It was not till the next time I visited the Middle River that I became acquainted with Kenneth Fraser, an amiable Christian, whom I never met without a smile on his countenance. At home he had been under the ministry of the Rev. Thomas MacKay, in Lairg, Sutherlandshire. He remembered so many savoury notes of Mr. MacKay's sermons, that I could not but have a high opinion of the character of both.

"It was no little discouragement to me that I scarcely saw any books among the people. Those who spoke English had, indeed, a few, which they had brought with them from their former abodes, but scarcely one of them had got any addition to his stock since. Almost all of them had a Bible; and it was to be seen with some of the Highlanders who could not read. There was no school in the place. Squire Patterson had built a small house, and hired a teacher for a few months, now and then, for his own children. In three or perhaps four other places, three or four of the nearest neighbours had united and hired a teacher for a few months at different times; and this was a great exertion. What was more discouraging, I could not see a situation in Pictou where a school could be maintained for a year, so thin and scattered was the population. Besides, many of the Highlanders were perfectly indifferent about education, for neither themselves nor any of their ancestors had ever tasted its pleasure or its profit. But afterwards

I found that children made quicker progress in the small and temporary schools with which the people were obliged to content themselves, than they did at home in their large and stationary schools: and I found it easier than I had thought to rouse the Highlanders to attend to the education of their children, so far as to read the Bible. I made it a rule to inculcate this duty upon parents when speaking to them about baptism. There are now sixty schools in Pictou district; but in almost all of them the plan continues of hiring a man by the year or half-year."*

We may add here some notes, which we have deciphered from his short-hand MS., of an address delivered by himself some years after, in which he describes the state of Pictou on his arrival, and its condition subsequently.

"1. In Pictou not a loaf could be afforded of our own wheat. There was no mill to grind, now we have plenty of mills, and plenty of loaves. We had an imitation flour by the hand-mill, but of oat-mills we had not a semblance, but now we have oat-mills and oatmeal so good, it should not be to come from Scotland.

"2. There was not a foot of road in the district, and for carriage, neither sleighs nor gigs. The chief of the travel was by canoes, or along the shore when the tide was out, and most disagreeable it often was, especially in crossing brooks and guts, where we had often to go afoot, but in very soft ground. There was a path from the West to the Middle River, and from the Middle River to the East, but no path from any of the rivers to the harbour. See the difference now. We have roads that princes might be proud of. We had not a dozen of horses.†"

* This was written about the year 1826.

† There were two men living in this neighbourhood at the beginning of this year, (1859,) one of whom is still living, who recollected the first horse they ever saw. The one had heard of a man in the neighbourhood having got such an animal, and not long after being down on the Intervale at West River, he was struck with terror at the sudden appearance of a huge beast which he concluded must be the aforesaid horse. He retained his faculties sufficiently to consider whether it would be better immediately to take to

"3. There was not a merchant in the district, nor any who commonly kept goods for sale, or made the third of his living by the sale of goods. Little schooners came round in the summer with some necessary articles, to which the people repaired in their canoes, and got a few things for which they exchanged a little produce. Sometimes John Patterson got a few pounds worth more than he needed, and afterward sold them. But see what stores we have now. None among us can tell their number, and some of them would make a decent appearance in any town whatsoever. We had scarcely any tradesmen of any kind. We had weavers, and tailors, but I would not see a chaise for a wonder.

"4. In this town there was not a single house for years after I came here. The town was some years without a single inhabitant, then there was a shed with one family, then another with it, and so on till it became what we see it now. Not a man in Pictou would believe that ever we should see a room like this in which we are now assembled. Now Pictou deserves the name of a town. It is fast increasing, and some of the houses deserve the name of palaces when compared with what we possessed then.

"5. There was no school, now we have scores of them. Now we have a Seminary of education, superior to some of the American colleges. There was no minister, now we have eleven of them. As for lawyers there was such good neighbourhood amongst us, that we never expected to need a lawyer or a court-house, but we have now gotten much use for both. We have also a printing press.

"6. As for our population, Pictou did not then contain five

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flight, but on reflection concluded that if he did so it might lead the animal to pursue him. He therefore glided away quietly, till he got some bushes between himself and the horse, when he took to his heels, and ran with all his might until he reached home. The other tells with equal interest that being a short distance from his father's house, he was surprised on his return at seeing an animal unknown to him tied to a tree—that while peeping curiously at it from behind a tree, he was still more surprised at seeing a man, who came out of the house, mount upon its back and ride away.

hundred souls. If Merigomish be included, I suppose they would amount to a few more souls than five hundred, now they amount to twenty-five times the number then."

An individual who arrived in Pictou in the year following, and traversed the eastern part of Nova Scotia, thus describes the state of matters then: "In 1787 there were only four or five horses from Salmon River to Antigonish. There was not one inhabitant on the Cape Breton side of the Gut of Canso, and but one on the Nova Scotia side. In 1788 there was one house at Ship Harbour. I may add that from Pictou to Cocaigne, there were but four or five families at River John, and Mr. Waugh and his family at Tatamagouche, some refugees at Wallace, and but one family at Bay Verte. At Miramichi there were but five families."

CHAPTER VI.

FIRST YEAR'S LABOURS. 1786–1787.

"Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage, which dwell solitarily in the wood, in the midst of Carmel; let them feed in Bashan and Gilead as in the days of old." Mic. vii. 14.

We now enter upon an unpleasant portion of Dr. MacGregor's history, viz., the controversy in which immediately after his arrival he was involved with the brethren sent out by the Burgher Synod—a controversy which excited a good deal of irritation, and for a time had an injurious effect upon the common cause. We have not been able to obtain full particulars on the subject. The minutes of the Truro Presbytery have been mislaid within a short period, and the most important papers, some of which were in existence a few years ago, have perished, while traditionary information is uncertain. We shall give such a general account of it as we have been able to gather. He thus refers to it himself:

"This week* I went to Truro, and preached to the Presbytery and people there, and had a long conversation about union to no effect. They, being better acquainted with the state of the Province, insisted, that as the grounds of difference at home had no existence here, they should not mar our communion; but I being a stranger, thought that the change of place made no material difference, and insisted that they should condemn here what I condemned at home and here. An undue irritation took place, which continued, in some degree, while

* See Note *ante*; page 105.

these two ministers lived. This want of union was no small trial to me, as I was alone, and there were three of them."

The meeting here referred to took place on the 2nd of August 1786, when the first Presbytery formed in Nova Scotia, was constituted under the name of the Associate Presbytery of Truro. The ministers present were the Rev. Daniel Cock of Truro, the Rev. David Smith of Londonderry, the Rev. Hugh Graham of Cornwallis, the Rev. George Gilmore of Windsor, and Dr. MacGregor. Of these Mr. Gilmore only sat as a correspondent member, and never seems to have taken any part in their proceedings. Dr. MacGregor attended the meeting, took part in the devotional exercises, but afterward refused to unite with them, so that the Presbytery actually consisted of the three ministers first named, all from the Burgher Synod.

This refusal led to several interviews and a large amount of epistolary correspondence. It was remarked that at their meetings he was in bodily presence mild and gentle, but that his letters were not only weighty and powerful, but sometimes very severe. In the course of discussion, which was conducted on the part of the Presbytery principally by Mr. Smith, a good deal of angry feeling was excited, and hard blows were given on both sides. But even if we could describe the matters involving personal irritation, which occurred in the course of the controversy, any farther account would be quite uncalled for at this date. One result of this controversy was that individuals through the congregations of the Truro Presbytery, who had been connected with the Antiburgher Synod in the mother country, took part with the Doctor, and being joined by others, who perhaps had become disaffected to their ministers, but who acted under the profession of zeal for the truth, formed parties in several sections opposed to the Presbytery. On the other hand, we regret to say, that from Mr. Smith's letters it appears, that he favoured such opposition to the Doctor as that of William MacKay hereafter to be described.

In consequence of this state of things the Presbytery some years later, in accordance with a representation of the congre-

gation of Truro, renewed correspondence with him. He in consequence gave in a letter, containing a formal statement of his reasons for declining union with them, most of which he had given previously. This document, though in existence a few years ago, we have been unable to obtain, but we have a letter containing remarks upon it, from which we learn something of his grounds for separating from them. They were eight in number. The first was the Burgess Oath. Another was the manner in which the Rev. James Munro was admitted a member of Presbytery, there being at that time some imputations thrown out against his doctrine. A third was the use of Watts' Psalms, by some of the adherents of the Presbytery, and we believe by some of the ministers. The practice had been introduced by the settlers who had emigrated from the United States. A fourth was the mode of electing elders, but what the matter of complaint on this head was, we have not ascertained. Another was that the Presbytery had not adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith in terms sufficiently explicit. On this point he went the length of saying, that it was no more the Confession of Faith of the Presbytery, than was the Creed of Pope Pius the IV. The reason, however, which in the present day will be regarded as of deepest interest, was the fact that the Rev. Daniel Cock, one of the members of Presbytery, held a coloured girl in slavery. On this point he went so far as to say, that he hoped he would rather burn at the stake than keep communion with one who did so. The other two reasons we have not been able to ascertain.

On looking at these reasons, it will be seen that the first, if not some others, refers to matters of local interest in Scotland. Considering the tenacity with which the minute distinctions between different denominations are held there, and the violence with which the controversies of the time were conducted, we need not be at all surprised, that a person just coming from the heat of conflict, should refuse to unite with ministers of different views on these subjects. The same thing has been happening ever since. Persons coming here naturally trans-

port hither all the questions and issues, that were being tried in the country of their birth, and believe that faithfulness to truth and duty requires that matters only of local interest should be made a ground of separation. It requires some years' residence to show the folly of retaining such distinctions, and many never learn to abandon them. It appears therefore to us unfortunate that Dr. MacGregor was called on to decide this question so soon after his arrival here. Those who had been longer in the country insisted that these differences had properly no existence here, and should not be made grounds of separation. A few years' residence here led him to the same conclusion, and in the above extract he acknowledges that they judged more accurately than he did, and he afterward became one of the most ardent friends of union.

It must be observed, in addition, that the Antiburgher body in whose views he had been educated, held, as we have observed in a former chapter, the very closest views regarding communion. Forbearance on matters of religious opinion was held to be a sinful connivance at error or wrong doing. They argued for charity toward those from whom they differed, but to hold communion with those who could not agree with them even on the minutest points, was considered as compromising their own testimony, as holding fellowship with error, and becoming partakers in its guilt. In these views he had been educated, and at this time he fully adopted them, so that when the Truro brethren, admitting the difference in their views, pled for forbearance, he at once took strong ground in opposition, and the general question underwent a thorough discussion. We may mention that, on this point particularly, he had a long epistolary controversy with the late Robert Archibald, Esq., of Musquodobort. We have some letters of the latter in our possession, that, as the production of a layman, not having a classical education, are highly creditable exhibitions both of his theological knowledge and Christian spirit.

It is but just to observe here, that while Dr. MacGregor felt himself precluded conscientiously from fellowship with these

brethren, he never introduced among the people of his charge the controversy on the Burgess Oath, or any of the other questions at issue between the Secession and the other Presbyterian bodies in Scotland. He faithfully acted in the spirit of the injunction of Synod, that he was sent not to make Seceders but Christians. No assent was ever required from any whom he admitted to the privileges of the church, to the peculiarities which distinguished the Secession from other members of the Presbyterian family, and whatever we may think of his views on communion at this time, no man could be more free from a sectarian spirit, than he was through his whole career.

During this separation two points arose of some difficulty. The body from which he had come, held that even "occasional hearing" of preaching from those against whose position they were lifting a protest was wrong. But should he now say that people should not go to hear Mr. Cock? He was not long in coming to the conclusion, that however these views might answer where people had the opportunity of attending upon the ministrations of those holding the same religious profession, it would be wrong to attempt to put them into practice in this country where they had no such opportunity. The other point of difficulty was, whether it was his duty to preach to those in the congregations of the Truro brethren, who adhered to his views? Would not this be exciting strife? He laid the subject before his friends in Scotland. Mr. Buist thus gives his opinion on these points:

"As to supplying—I am much at a loss. I think you can judge much better. We should engage in the Lord's service when the call is clear, without fear of consequences. This is all that I can say. I may also add, "Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." As to hearing Mr. C., you are in an infant state and must come to our order by degrees. At the same time you may tell your mind as to such things as persons may be able to bear it."

We have only to add that he generally discouraged such applications to him for preaching, and only yielded to them in consequence of earnest solicitation.

One of his reasons, however, will be admitted to have pos-

sessed great importance, and in the opinion of British readers justified him in adopting high ground. We allude to the fact of slaveholding by a member of Presbytery. This was the subject on which a great portion of their controversy turned, and the one which caused the greatest amount of irritation. This, however, is a matter of such interest, that we reserve a fuller account of it for our next chapter.

Two other subjects of discussion are worthy of notice. The first was the use of Watts' Psalms. Those who had adopted them urged the common objections against the Psalms of David. They represented them as opposed to the spirit of the New Testament. The imprecations which they contain were particularly held as indicating the inferior morality of the Old Testament, and as unfit for Christian worship. He never adopted the extreme view of denying the lawfulness of using human compositions in the praise of God, but he justly regarded the Psalms as affording the highest models of spiritual song, and such imputations he regarded as reflections upon the word of God. This led him to a thorough examination of the subject, and to the preparation of a complete Treatise on the Imprecations of the Psalms. We do not know at what time it was composed, but we find it referred to in letters written in the early part of 1790 as in existence previously. This treatise was supposed to have perished with many of his other papers. We are happy to say that while the present work was going through the press, it has been discovered,—completely prepared for publication, and we have now great pleasure in including it among his remains.

The view which he takes of the subject is not the usual one. He boldly takes the ground, that these imprecations are prayers—not however against David's personal enemies, but against the impenitent enemies of God, and on the supposition of their continuing so. The persons against whom David imprecated might be in one point of view his personal enemies; looking at them in this light his disposition was to seek nothing but their good; but viewing them as the irreconcilable enemies of the

Most High, his regard for the honour of God led him to pray for their destruction. He shows that the same is our duty, because it is the will of God that his impenitent enemies should be destroyed, and we should concur in his will and pray that it be accomplished, there being however this difference between our circumstances and those of David, that while the latter knew, by revelation, that certain persons were of this character, we are entirely ignorant who are and shall continue to be such; and therefore our prayers must be in the most general terms, and not directed against any particular individuals. We learn also that he endeavoured to show, that our Saviour's language and the practice of the apostles taught the same lessons. This is not only a very simple view, but in our opinion unquestionably the correct one; and we think that the Treatise thus happily still preserved affords evidence of original powers of thought, and of a thorough examination of the Scriptures, the more remarkable when we consider that it must have been written before he was thirty years of age, and when he had a very limited access to books.

The other subject of discussion which we deem worthy of notice, was the observance of fasts enjoined by Government authority. The Antiburghers in the old country generally refused to observe these, as they considered that their doing so would be an acknowledgment of the authority of civil government in matters of religion, and particularly a recognition of the unscriptural constitution of church and state established by law in Britain. The terms in which the proclamation for the observance of such days, were till a recent period issued, commanding persons to assemble in their respective churches and chapels, as they tendered the favour of Almighty God, and would avert his displeasure, and enjoining the use of a prayer prepared by the Bishop for the occasion, and even with threats of those refusing being punished by law, were exceedingly offensive, and fitted to provoke opposition. One of the Antiburgher party in Colchester writing to him, speaks thus,

"I suppose you have before now received his Excellency's orders by proclamation to keep a fast upon that Holy day, dedicated to St. Mark, as also a copy of the Right Rev'd Bishop's prayer, which you are to read upon pain of being punished as law directs, for disobedience to the *lawful* commands of the best of Governments. Must they not be amazing strong and prevalent prayers, that are sent up by the force of civil law?"

Those who adhered to these views strenuously refused to observe such days, and were in the habit of attending to ordinary business upon them in the most public manner, to show their resistance to what they regarded as an intrusion on the part of civil rulers into the province of the church.

After all, when we consider the spirit of the body in Scotland, at that time, perhaps it is as well that the union did not take place then. We may judge how such a step on his part would have been received by them, from the manner in which they acted regarding a similar step, adopted by the brethren who had gone to the United States. In the year 1767 the ministers who had gone from the Antiburgher Synod, having coalesced with the Burgher brethren, the Synod in Scotland refused to sanction the union, declaring the terms of it to be "inconsistent with the maintenance of the testimony among their hands against the course of the separating brethren," and when in the following year, they received a letter from the Rev. D. Telfar, offering to give information regarding the course of the Presbytery, he was informed in a reply sent to him by the Moderator, that "his communication had been received, but that the Synod could not hold any communication with him, except in the way of receiving satisfaction from him, with a view to the removal of the censure, under which he is at present lying, and that as to the terms of agreement referred to in his letter, they could not take them into consideration."*

And again, when the Seceding ministers in the United States united with the brethren of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, under the name of the Associate Reformed Church, the Synod, just the year previous to Dr. MacGregor's arrival here, passed an act expressing their disapprobation of the conduct of those

* MacKerrow. Hist. of Secession. I. 388—390.

brethren, who had "coalesced with ministers of other denominations, on terms so loose and general as to open the door for the grossest latitudinarianism." They disclaimed all connection with, and acknowledgment of "the body so constituted," and they declared the brethren who had joined it, to be in a state of "apostasy from their Reformation testimony and their witnessing profession."*

In fact the counsels of the Antiburgher Synod were at this time swayed by Adam Gib, a man of clear mind, strong intellect, and determined spirit, but a man of high temper, who held the most rigid sentiments regarding communion, and the highest views of Ecclesiastical authority. Had Dr. MacGregor at this time united with the Burgher brethren, he would undoubtedly have been immediately separated from the fellowship of his brethren, and all ministerial assistance would have been refused him. But by taking up a separate position, he was led to send home those importunate supplications, which brought to this country those excellent men, who were his coadjutors in establishing Presbyterianism in the Province, and thus the separation, like that of Paul and Barnabas, tended to the furtherance of the gospel.

Having thus given as full a view of this controversy as the facts in our possession enable us, and as fairly as we are able, we return to his narrative:

"There were so few houses in Pictou with any accommodations, that I could get no convenient place for lodging. On the East River there was one house, within two-and-a-half miles of the place fixed upon for a meeting-house, which had two fireplaces; and here I had to fix, for there was none equal to it within four miles of the other place of public worship. Still it was very inconvenient, for the heads of the family had to sit and sleep in the same room; but I could not better myself. This circumstance fixed my lot on the East River to this day. After two years I got a house where I had a room to myself.

"During the whole of the harvest and the fall I saw no pre-

* MacKerrow. Hist. of Secession. I. 434.

paration for building any of the meeting-houses. This discouragement, with the rest, affected me so, that, if I could have left Pictou, I would have done it, even late in the fall I saw little fruit of my labours; still Providence was, in many respects, favourable. Though public worship had been conducted in the open air, till we were compelled by the cold to go into a fire house, yet we were never disturbed by a shower.

"Toward the end of September the session agreed that there was need of an increase of elders—two for each river, and one for the harbour. This was intimated to the congregation, who soon after chose the following persons:—Donald MacKay, Peter Grant, Robert Marshall, Kenneth Fraser, John MacLean, Hugh Fraser, and John Patterson. I name them because they were my companions, my support and comfort, when Pictou was destitute and poor, and I was without the assistance of a co-presbyter. They have all given in their account, as also the three ordained in Scotland, and I trust they have done it with joy, and not with grief. They were not ordained till the next May.*

"The upper settlement of the East River being farther off from the place of public worship than any other part of the congregation, it was agreed to let them have sermon in their own settlement three Sabbaths annually, and I agreed to give them three week days besides. This arrangement continued till a second minister came to Pictou, when they got more. I saw them the first time early in October, and on Sabbath they came all to hear with great joy and wonder; for they had not indulged the hope of ever seeing a minister in their settlement. They had very poor accommodations. I had to sleep on a little straw on the floor."

* These elders from all that we have heard of them were men well-fitted for their position. Their memory is still fragrant, and with one special exception their descendants are generally distinguished, not only as sober and industrious members of the community, but pious and useful members of the church. This exception may be explained by the fact that he afterward kept a public house. Though selling liquor was not then regarded as improper, yet the effects upon his family were most disastrous.

As already mentioned, all the settlers on the upper settlement were Highlanders, most of whom had served in the American war. Part of them were from the parish of Urquhart. Having settled but a short time previous to the Doctor's arrival, they were of course in poorer circumstances than the other settlers. At some distance up, the river forms two branches, commonly called the East and West Branches. Most of the settlers were Protestants and Presbyterians, but some of them were Roman Catholics. Among these were the Chisholms on the East Branch, who were from Strathglass. The father attended the Doctor's preaching, but never became a decided Protestant. One son, Archibald, joined the church and lived and died a consistent Christian life, and so did a sister, Mrs. John MacKenzie of West River, mother-in-law to William Matheson, Esq. They have left a large number of descendants, many of whom are most useful and respectable members of the church. There were also some of that persuasion about the West Branch, and one or two became Protestants, when the priest, seeing that they were likely to be lost to the Romish Church altogether, if they remained there, induced them all to leave. The rest of the settlers were generally a pious people. Even those who had served in the army were very different from the common run of disbanded soldiers. They were decent emigrants, who had been induced to serve while the war lasted, and from the traditionary information I have received, it appears that even while in the army they were not neglectful of their religious duties. At that time as now the army had its praying centurions and "devout soldiers," and some of them used to speak in grateful recollection of the efforts of a Lieut. MacDonald for their spiritual welfare. Peter Grant, afterward an elder, kept "a reading," I believe before Dr. MacGregor came, at all events afterward, when there was no preaching in the settlement.

The only mode of travelling to this part of his congregation, was walking along the edge of the river, and, where they came to a brook, ascending it till they reached a part where they

were able to cross it. In winter, of course, the travelling was on snow shoes. Sometimes the young men would at that season of the year go down at the end of the week to beat a track for him. Toward spring when the snow began to get soft in the middle of the day, by beating it down, it would be frozen sufficiently hard the next morning to bear him. On one occasion having arrived at the house of James MacDonald, the elder, without their having done so, the latter began exclaiming against them for their neglect. "Oh," said the Doctor, "you look like an angry man." Seeing him so contented, the good elder had to forego his ire.

His first sermon at the upper settlement was preached at James MacDonald's intervale under the shade of a large oak tree, the largest in that whole region. This was his ordinary place of preaching in summer for some time, though occasionally he preached at Mr. Charles MacIntosh's, about six miles farther up, under the shade of some trees, particularly a large elm, which had been left standing on his farm; and at the West Branch, either at Mr. Donald Chisholm's, or James Cameron's. In winter the preaching was in private houses. On one occasion when near the conclusion of his first sermon, the whole floor gave way, and precipitated most of the audience into the cellar. He himself was standing by the chimney, and escaped. The whole floor except the spot where he was standing fell in one body, so that no person was hurt. The only articles of any value in the cellar were under the part where he stood, so that no loss was sustained. It was a fine day toward the close of winter, and he preached the second sermon in the barn.

After a few years a church was built. It was of logs and situated at Grant's Lake, to accommodate the residents on both branches of the river. This continued to be the usual place of meeting till about the year 1815, when two new churches were built, the one on the East Branch and the other on the West.

"On November the 15th winter set in. We had a few showers of snow before, which melted away; but the snow of

that day continued until the middle of April, and some of it till May. I was tired of winter before New Year's Day, but before March was over, I forgot that it should go away at all. The snow became gradually deeper, till it was between two and three feet deep; when women could travel only where a path was made, and men betook themselves to snow-shoes.* We had now to alter the plan of preaching entirely. People could not sit in a house without fire, and they could not travel far. It was therefore agreed that I should preach two Sabbaths at the East River, two upon the Harbour, two upon the West River, and two upon the Middle River, and then renew the circle, till the warm weather should return. The upper settlement of the East River, being unprovided with snow shoes, were excluded through the whole winter from all communication with the rest of the people, as effectually as if they had belonged to another world, excepting one visit by two young men, who made a sort of snow-shoes of small tough withes, plaited and interwoven in snow-shoe frames. This circulating plan of preaching was no little inconvenience to me. For six weeks in eight I was from home, almost totally deprived of my books and of all accommodation for study, often changing my lodging, and exposed to frequent and excessive cold. But it had this advantage, that it gave me an easier opportunity of examining the congregation than I could otherwise have had; for I got these duties performed in each portion between the two Sabbaths on which I was there.

"I resolved not to confine my visitations to Presbyterians, but to include all, of every denomination, who would make me welcome; for I viewed them as sheep without a shepherd. The purport of my visitations was, to awaken them to a sight of their sinful and dangerous state, to direct them to Christ, to exhort them to be diligent to grow in religious knowledge, and

* It is worthy of remark that the winter after his arrival was long known as the most severe in the recollection of the oldest settlers. So early did it set in, that in the month of November the harbour was frozen sufficiently for persons to cross on the ice.

to set up and maintain the worship of God in the family and closet morning and evening. I did not pass a house, and though I was not cordially welcome by all, my visits were productive of more good than I expected; and I trust they were the means of bringing to Christ several who were not Presbyterians. In the course of this visitation, I met with a number who had maintained family and closet prayers almost regularly. Every one, however, except Robert Marshall alone, acknowledged occasional neglects. Numbers readily expressed their purpose henceforth punctually to comply with the directions they received, and expressed great thankfulness for them: numbers more did the same, but with fear, and only in consequence of being strongly urged. Others positively refused: —some, because they did not esteem it a duty; others, because, though it was a duty, they were not capable of doing it. This course of visitation was of great advantage to many of the settlers. It made them resolve on serving the Lord; and they never drew back. I hope many of them are now glorified. It was also of no little advantage to myself. I began to see that my labours were not altogether in vain. I found more friends to the gospel than I expected. I found some under much concern about their eternal happiness, lamenting their sinful and miserable condition, particularly their ignorance and negligence, and misimprovement of time; anxious to find the narrow way, and very thankful for direction. They informed me of notes of the sermons which affected them, and of the various workings which they occasioned in their minds. I found, also, that they were not inattentive to the Scriptures. Many passages were recited to me, with a view to ascertain whether they had understood them correctly. These things cheered my heart; and even with respect to such as were not at all affected by my instructions, I began to be less discouraged, because time might bring a blessing to them also.

"But there were a set of profligates, at the head of whom were the gentlemen of the army above mentioned, whose enmity to the gospel grew fast, and in a short time became outrageous.

Before the end of winter some of them threatened to shoot me, and burn the house in which I lodged. I may here say all that I have to say of them, and be quit of them. Two things exasperated them against me—*first*, Some of them who had their wives in Scotland lived with other women here; and some of them lived with other men's wives, whose husbands were in Scotland. I spoke to them concerning the irregularity of their conduct, and prevailed upon one of them to reform; but the rest were hardened. It was not, however, anything that I said that exasperated them. Before I came, scarcely any person but Robert Marshall condemned them; but now, when people began to receive the gospel, many reprobated their conduct in the plainest language, as utterly inconsistent with the law of God and Christianity. I had to bear the blame of all these reproofs, and the uneasiness which they caused. *Secondly*, The half-pay officers intended and expected to exercise nearly the same authority over the men after they were disbanded which they had done before, and for a time succeeded wonderfully. But time, intercourse with the other settlers, and doubtless also an increase of Christian knowledge, induced the men to withdraw their subjection. Of this also I had to bear the blame. Indeed, they counted me the cause of almost all evil, and thought that the place could not be right till I was banished out of it. Next winter they held a meeting with a view to send me bound to the governor, expecting their influence with him to be such, that their mere accusations would procure my banishment.* But one of the gentlemen present, after a good deal of consultation, gave them Gamaliel's advice to the council of the Jews, with which they thought proper to comply, and so dispersed. They continued, however, for seven years pests and plagues to the congregation, particularly circulating the most mischievous lies they could devise. But they ran fast to poverty and destruction, so that scarcely one of them remained at the end of that period. Two of them were drowned; one died

* So strong was their animosity to him that, as one of my informants said, "They would have killed him if they dared."

in the poor-house in Halifax, of a disease not the most honourable ; another was found dead in a stable, hung by the belly to one of the horse tackle hooks. It was supposed that he had gone up to sleep on the hay drunk, and that, having fallen down, the hook caught him.

"Another cut his throat ; but I trust he was a brand plucked out of the burning. Divine Providence would have it, that his cue, which was large, should lie alongside of his throat, and prevent the desperate cut from being fatal. In a moment he became penitent. He was himself a physician, and his seduced companion being at hand, he speedily gave her his best directions for a cure, and sent for me to come and see him. O the power of conscience ! I was before the most hated of men, but now the most desired. I went immediately, and soon found that he had great need of instruction. Though he had great anxiety and perplexity of mind about his future state, he was wofully ignorant of the odiousness of sin in the sight of God, and of the enmity of the carnal mind against him ; and equally so of the spiritual beauty and purity of Christ's salvation, and of the gracious manner in which it is conferred. I had to instruct him like a child. I set before him as well as I could the evil of sin, and the love, grace, and power of Christ as a Saviour, and prayed several times for the Saviour's compassion to his soul, and for God's blessing upon the means of grace he granted him to enjoy. I left him with a mixture of hope and fear ; for though he was very thankful for instruction, and for his being spared to bear it, yet he seemed slower in understanding it than I expected one in his situation would be. As he recovered, I had frequent opportunities of seeing him, but still thought him slow in his progress. As his former extravagance had brought him to great poverty, one of the elders, in pure compassion, took him to his own house, where he lived about a year, and where he enjoyed the privilege of Christian instruction in a special manner. The elder's opinion of him coincided with mine. He grew but slowly. As there were too few people, and too few diseases in Pictou then to provide

a living for a physician, he left it and went home to his friends, who were able to provide for him. I had afterwards a letter (and but one) from him, containing an affectionate remembrance of the kindness of the Pictou people toward him, especially the elder's and mine, and expressing his earnest desire and hope that thenceforward he might be enabled to walk humbly with his God. I had also a letter from a brother of his, a pious minister, I believe, in New England, expressing great gratitude for my kindness and attention to his brother in his extremity, and confident hopes of his growth and perseverance in grace. On the whole, I trust he was a brand plucked out of the burning, and if he was, he will be for ever a remarkable trophy of divine grace. I am sorry that I have no evidence of the penitence of the unhappy victim of his seduction, who, in her turn, by her extravagance, reduced him to that poverty and want which drove him to the desperate act related above. She too left Pictou, but left it for the purlieu of one of the haunts of vice in Halifax, which 'are the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.'

"A number of the profligates who had belonged to the army remained with us till the beginning of the war in 1793. Then the governor raised a regiment to help on the war. A recruiting party came to Pictou, and our drunken vagabonds, almost to a man, readily embraced the opportunity to re-enlist, that they might again enjoy the miserable life they had before led in the army. In a few months we got clear of them, and I believe not one individual of those who were sober and industrious enlisted. I looked upon Pictou as purged, and hoped I would never see it polluted again. Little did I expect to see some of those I baptized as polluted as these. By-and-by we met with sources of corruption which we did not foresee.

"The want of mills proved a great impediment in my course of visitation, for it obliged every family to have a hand-mill for its own use. As soon as I sat down the mill was set a-going; and though it was but a hand-mill, it made such a noise as to mar conversation, and most commonly kept either the male or

the female head of the family from all share in it. But for this circumstance I could often have visited two families for one that I did visit. Grinding on the hand-mill was so laborious that it was let alone till necessity impelled to it. This was the occasion of saving much wheat, for many a meal was made without bread, on account of the trouble of grinding. Ten years afterwards proper mills were erected, and the flour which used to be spared and sent to market, was sent to the mill and eaten. The women in general learned to make good bread, and people lived better; but they wanted wheat for the market.*

"The ice was a great convenience during winter in all my travels, especially in my visitations, as it removed all obstructions from water, and enabled me to go straight from one house to another, whatever brook, creek, or other water might intervene. Strangers cannot easily conceive what an advantage this is in a new settlement, placed wholly along the sides of the waters, without roads or bridges. It is extremely troublesome to travel along shore, round every point and bay, and up the side of every brook to the head of the tide and back again,

* We have never seen any of these hand-mills, or querns, as they were called; but the following is a description of them: They consisted of two stones, about two feet in diameter. The lower was fixed, and the upper surface "picked" as millers say, and a piece of iron was inserted in the centre. The upper stone was heavier, being about ten inches or a foot thick, and had a hole in the centre, through which the iron in the under stone passed up. In this hole was also put the grain to be ground. The lower end of an upright pole was fastened to the upper surface of this stone near its outer edge, while the upper end was fixed in a cross piece of wood, between the upper beams of the house. Seizing this by one hand, the operator, whirled round the upper stone with a rapidity according to his strength, while with the other hand he or she put the grain to be ground into the hole in the centre. John Patterson made an improvement upon them by putting a rim round them, and a spout at one side, so that the flour, instead of coming off the stone all round, might come out at one place. This was afterward sifted, and made a wholesome bread. The first application of any other power to grinding corn in the county of Pictou, was the erection of a wind-mill, by John Patterson, at what is now called Norway Point.

while even the shore is often encumbered with rocks, bogs, and fallen trees."

While the ice was no doubt a convenience, travelling upon it was sometimes attended with considerable danger. Among his memoranda we find the words "fright on the ice," and we have heard of several occasions of his being in peril of his life in this way. The danger may arise in various ways. One source is from snow-storms, suddenly rising when persons are at some distance from the shore. The track is soon covered up, the shore cannot be seen—the sun is concealed—and the person gets blinded with drift, and losing his course, wanders hither and thither, and sometimes perishes. At present, it is customary to place a row of bushes a few rods apart, along the principal lines of travelling, to guide the traveller, but in those times this expedient was unknown. We have heard of his being in danger, in this way, especially on one occasion while on Merigomish Harbour in company with Thomas Fraser, the Elder. It came on a snow-storm, in which they lost their way, and when they reached the shore they were nearly exhausted.

Another source of danger is from the ice being weak, as it will be in spring or fall, or as it sometimes is, even in winter, in particular spots from local causes, such as mussel-beds, &c. We have heard also of his being in danger in this way. On one occasion, crossing, we believe, Pictou Harbour in the fall of the year, the ice at mid-channel began to bend with the weight of himself and his companions. They separated and got down on their hands and knees so as to cover as large a surface as possible, and moved forward as rapidly as they could. The new ice formed in the fall has considerable elasticity, unlike the ice in spring, which has begun to decay by the action of the sun. And this circumstance saved them, for before they got across, the ice had so far yielded that considerable water was upon it. On one occasion, perhaps the same, having arrived in Pictou to preach, the people beheld his arrival with actual amazement They could scarcely believe it possible that he had crossed on the ice in the state it was. On being assured that he had

actually done so, the reply was, "Well it must have been your *faith* that brought you across."

It must not be supposed that he manifested anything like fool-hardiness in rushing into danger unnecessarily. But when he had an appointment to preach or perform other ministerial duty, he considered it as forming a call in Providence, and he would undergo some risk in order to fulfil such an engagement, trusting in the protection of his heavenly Father. He has passed through dangers in order to preach, that he would not venture into to return home. On one occasion having crossed Pictou Harbour on the ice, his companions asked him after preaching, if he wished to return home. His reply was, "No, the ice is not fit." "It is as fit as when we came across." "Yes, but we had then a call to come; but it is not necessary for us to go back just now, we can stay where we are in the meantime." He reasoned in the same way in other circumstances. We have heard of his being in danger in crossing Pictou Harbour in a canoe. It was on a Sabbath morning, and so rough that those who were with him were unwilling to attempt crossing, but he encouraged them, saying that it was in a good cause, and their Master would take care of them. They got over safely after being exposed to considerable danger. After preaching, on their asking him if he wished to return, he replied, "No, we have no call to go." The people came to regard him as under the care of a special Providence, and to consider themselves as safe where he felt called to go. On one occasion many years after, he came on a stormy day to Donald MacDougall, who established the first ferry across the Harbour and asked him to ferry him across. MacDougall replied that it was very stormy, but he would try. He immediately got ready his boat and ferried him across safely. But he said afterward, that there was not another person living, with whom he would have ventured to attempt crossing on that day. The Doctor, however, did not understand from MacDougall's reply that he considered it so dangerous, or he would not have asked him.

"By the time I got through the visitation, I was much en-

couraged, compared with my former deep despondence. I found most of the people affectionate and friendly, some of them exceedingly so, being persuaded that they obtained saving benefit by the very first sermon I preached. I found many of them willing to receive instruction and advice, and greatly regretting their ignorance and their past negligence. Besides, I met with more piety and knowledge than I expected, so that I began to hope that my labour would not be in vain in the Lord.

"When April came the sun began to show his power in dissolving the snow and the ice, whose dominion had continued so long that I had almost forgotten that summer would come. Before April was ended, the harbour was completely clear of the ice; and on the 6th of May, the day on which the elders were ordained, I saw the last patch of snow for that season. The boats and canoes were then launched and prepared for summer employment; for they were our horses, which carried most of us to sermon, and every other business. Now came on the spring work, and every hand that could help the farmer had plenty of employment. From the beginning of May till the middle of June was the time for ploughing, and sowing the various kinds of grain, and planting the potatoes. But there were few ploughs in Pictou. All the later settlers had to prepare the ground for the seed with hand-hoes; for the roots and stumps prevent the use of the plough till they are rotten. All the potato land was cleared from the wood, and planted with hoes. The trees were cut down in winter, and cross-cut, so as to be fit to be rolled in heaps for being burned. Rolling is heavy work, and often requires four or five men with hand-levers; on which account the neighbours gather to it in parties. The Americans are amazingly dexterous at this work, rolling huge logs along, launching them to the right or left, turning them round a stump in the way, or raising one end over it, and heaving it up on the pile. The ashes of the great quantity of timber which grows upon the land make good manure for the first crops—a most merciful arrangement of Providence for the poor settler, who has to sow and plant among stumps and

spreading roots, which often occupy one-third of the ground. The first two crops are generally good. No wheat was sown till the second week in May, nor potatoes planted till the first of June. Reaping was from the middle of August to that of November. The potatoes were raised in October. Spring comes now somewhat earlier, and harvest generally comes all at once. Grain sown at eight days' distance will often ripen simultaneously. I have known good wheat reaped in Pictou on the same day in August that it was sown in May; but this is very seldom.

"In June I received a long letter from the Rev. John Buist in Greenock, being the first word I heard from Scotland since I left it. It contained much news, both ecclesiastical and political, and was to me like life from the dead. Looking on myself as an exile from the world, and especially from Scotland, the reading of this letter revived all my tender feelings for my native country, my relations and friends, especially the ministers whom I left behind. At the same time I had a letter from my father, with the news of my mother's death. Thus I was taught to rejoice with trembling; yet, it helped to reconcile me to my lot. Reluctance to part with my mother was one of my objections against coming to Nova Scotia; and now I saw that staying at home would not have secured me from parting with her. For this event I was partly prepared by a dream, which I had at the time of her death. The dream is not worth relating to others; but it was such a warning to me, that I really expected to hear by the first letter of the death of a near relation. This expectation reconciled me more readily to the bereavement."

The dream to which he here refers was that he had seen his father's house on fire, and the remarkable circumstance about it is, that he had it *on the very night his mother died*. In writing about it to his friends in Scotland he said, that he believed that God sometimes spoke to men in a dream of the night. It may perhaps by some be regarded as superstition, but it is a fact that he sometimes regarded dreams, those of them at all events

which appeared as any way remarkable. Among his "memorabilia" the following occurs in short-hand, "Dreamed that I was busily engaged in quenching my father's little house on fire." We have heard of more than one instance, where he mentioned dreams which he had, as leading him to expect good or evil tidings, and of his connecting his dreams with events that followed.

The above paragraph exhibits one of the privations of his lot, which a heart like his, alive to the tenderest feelings toward kindred and country, must have felt very severely,—the little intercourse he was permitted to enjoy even by letter with his native land, and his friends there. He had left Scotland in June of the previous year, so that *a whole year had now elapsed before he had received any word from his friends.* The missionary on the most remote and solitary isle of the sea is scarcely so shut out from intercourse with the world as this. Of his friends and acquaintances whom he left in Scotland, scarcely ever did he see the face of any in the flesh. He never returned to visit them, none of them visited him, and we know of none who removed hither. He was probably, however, never as long again without some communication with his friends. Usually he received packages, at least twice a year. There was mail communication from Falmouth to Halifax oftener, but such was the class of vessels employed, so badly constructed, so liable to shipwreck, and so fatal to human life, that they went in the Navy by the name of coffins; and the mode of communication usually adopted, was by the vessels which came out spring and fall for timber. In fact, these were the two special seasons of writing and receiving letters. Then a few years after the war broke out, and continued with slight interruption for more than twenty years, rendering all communication with the mother country difficult and dangerous.

But the more rare such communications were, the more were they valued. There was scarcely such a thing at that time as a religious periodical, to inform him of what was doing in the church abroad, and he was indebted almost entirely to his cor-

respondents for ecclesiastical intelligence from Scotland. In Mr. Buist he had a faithful friend and valuable correspondent. We have before us several letters, which form a complete record of the events which had occurred affecting both church and state during the months previous, together with the personal and family history of ministers of his acquaintance. Such letters to him in his solitude were as "cold waters to a thirsty soul." He had other correspondents such as the Rev. James Robertson, of Kilmarnock, the Rev. Alexander Pringle, of Perth, the Rev. James Barlas, of Crieff, and some years later, the Rev. Samuel Gilfillan, of Comrie, but Mr. Buist was the most valued. This correspondence on both sides was a delightful exhibition of brotherly love and Christian sympathy. His letters to them were highly valued. Some years afterward portions of them were published in the religious periodicals of the day, and have thus been preserved; but we are not aware that there was any such periodical at that time in Scotland. And thus all his letters written during the first few years of his ministry have perished. But from the letters received in reply, we learn something of the nature of their contents. We learn that he poured into the ear of friendship the tale of his trials, his labours, and his success—that he sought the opinion and counsel of fathers and brethren on subjects of difficulty. We find him requesting their views on difficult passages of Scripture, or on perplexing questions of theology, but especially pleading for ministerial help, and sometimes for a helpmeet for him; while we notice his love for the flowers of his native land in a request to send him some daisy seed. On the other hand, in their letters they cheer and encourage him in his labours and privations, rejoicing in his joys and weeping over his trials, and sometimes accompanied them with substantial expressions of their sympathy in books or pamphlets recently published.

"The session appointed that July the 11th should be observed by all under their inspection, as a day of humiliation for sin, and prayer for the favour and grace of God to the congregation, specifying a number of plain causes and reasons for

the appointment. As the preaching could only accommodate one side of the congregation, the other complained for want of it; to remedy which the session agreed that there should be another humiliation day in the fall, and the preaching on the other side of the congregation. This example has been almost invariably followed ever since. The same custom is observed, I believe, through all the New England States.

"This humiliation day, the first ever observed publicly in Pictou, was kept very differently by different people. Some observed it with due attention and solemnity, sincerely seeking, I believe, to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God; and they received from him the favour and grace which they supplicated. But many others, especially those who were not within reach of hearing sermon (I allude not to the profligate), did not keep it, and did not know how to keep it. Some of them had never seen such a thing, and had no idea of it. Before the next humiliation day came round, occasion was taken to explain to them its nature and end, and that it should be observed with the solemnity and sanctity of a Sabbath; and ever after, so far as I know, they did so keep it.

"During this month the men were chiefly engaged in building the two new meeting-houses; but, instead of employing contractors to build them, they agreed to divide the work into a number of lots, and appointed a party of themselves to every lot. One party cut the logs and hauled them to the site; another hewed them and laid them in their place; a third provided boards for the roofs and floors; a fourth provided the shingles; those who were joiners were appointed to make the doors and windows; and those who did not choose to work provided the glass and the nails. Moss (fag) was stuffed between the logs, to keep out the wind and rain; but neither of the houses was lined with boards or ceiled, neither was one of them seated, otherwise than by logs laid where seats should be. Public worship was conducted in the open air all this summer and part of harvest, till the churches were finished; and we had the same kind Providence preserving us from rain and

tempest as we had last year; but no sooner were the houses built than great rain came on the Sabbath.

"Such were the first two churches of Pictou, and for a while they had no pulpits, purely because they could make a shift without them; and when they were made, they were not of mahogany, but of the white pine of Pictou. However, this mean exterior did not prevent the gospel from being preached and heard with profit and comfort.*

"During summer the session had several conversations about dispensing the sacrament of the Supper, but I got it delayed for this year. I had dispensed the ordinance of baptism often, sometimes indeed with fear and trembling, but I could not prevail upon myself to dispense the Lord's Supper; partly because I believed that not many of the people were prepared, but chiefly because I thought it too heavy a burden first to converse with the candidates one by one, and then to go through all the customary services in both languages; so it was put off.

"Preaching in two languages, and in two places so far distant from one another, created me many difficulties, for everything I wished the whole people to know needed to be told them four different times, viz., in the two languages and the two places. Though I preached two sermons every Sabbath, yet the people heard but one sermon in two weeks, except those who understood both languages. Even this circumstance was sometimes productive of trouble; for some who were backward to support the gospel, insisted that they who understood both languages should pay a double share of the stipend. Some-

* These two churches were some 35 or 40 feet long by 25 or 30 wide. The only seats in them were logs of wood, or slabs supported on blocks. There was a gallery or rather an upper story with a floor, seated in a similar manner, to which the young went up by a ladder. The one on the East River was situated on the west side of the river, a short distance above New Glasgow, on a rising ground between the old burial ground and the line of the present railroad. The one at Loch Broom was situated near the head of the harbour, on the farm then owned by William MacKenzie, still held by his descendants. It was situated near the shore, close by the brook that there enters the harbour.

times the Highlanders complained that I did not give them their due of the public services, but the rest complained that they got too much; and it was impossible to carry always with such an even hand as to please both parties. Sometimes they contended for precedence. The Gaelic was most prevalent on the East River, and the English on the West River and Harbour. This decided that at the former public worship should begin in the Gaelic, and in the English at the latter. At other meetings, however, little bickerings continued for some time but they learned to yield to one another, as they saw that no partiality was intended. At examinations and marriages I made it a rule to speak to those who knew both languages in that which they preferred. In one instance only of marriage had I to speak in both languages, telling the man his duties and engagements in English, and the woman hers in Gaelic. How they managed to court or to converse afterwards I know not; but they declared to me, and the neighbours confirmed it, that they could hardly speak a single word of one another's language."

This jealousy between English and Gaelic people is very apt to arise wherever they are united in the same society. Hugh Miller, in his "Schools and Schoolmasters," has given a graphic description of the working of it in his native town, and something similar has been exhibited in the county of Pictou. The Doctor had at times some difficulty in repressing such feelings. But he dealt out even-handed justice to them, and he was equally beloved by both. Two or three anecdotes illustrative of this may be interesting. Having preached on one occasion in English at the Middle River, the people requested him to preach the second sermon in the same language, as most, if not all present, understood it. He told those who made the request to go round among those assembled and see if there were any there who had no English, and if there were none he would comply with their request. They did so, and returned to say that there was just one old woman, who had no English. "Oh then," said the Doctor, "We must have the other sermon in Gaelic." He

added that he would act in the same way with the English under similar circumstances, and of this an example occurred on another occasion. Being at the upper settlement of the East River, he was asked to preach both sermons in Gaelic. He said that if *all* present understood it, he would. He was told that there was just one person, a stranger, who did not understand Gaelic, and he did not seem to care about preaching. He replied, "Oh, he has a soul to be saved,—and who knows but this sermon might be the means of saving that soul and making it happy to all eternity?" On another occasion having preached two sermons in Gaelic, he found some persons who did not understand that language, and preached a third sermon for them in English.

Still his feelings were very warm toward his Highland countrymen, which he exhibited in so simple a way as putting his contribution at a sacramental collection into the plate with the Gaelic, saying in private to some of the Highlanders, that he did not like to see their collection far behind the English.

"This summer many of the Highlanders wrote, or rather caused to be written, letters to their relations in Scotland, informing them that now they had the gospel here in purity, inviting them to come over, and telling them that a few years would free them from their difficulties. Accordingly, next summer a number of them found their way hither. Next year letters were sent home with the same information, and brought more. This circumstance turned the current of emigration toward Pictou, so that almost all the emigrants to Nova Scotia settled in Pictou, till it was full.

"As to the success of my ministrations this summer, I had more reason to be content than to complain. People in general attended public ordinances diligently and attentively. There was much outward reformation; and, I doubt not, some believers were added to the Lord. On considering, as maturely as I could, the circumstances of the people, I thought it my duty to sound the alarm of the law in their ears. Accordingly, I preached a course of sermons on the Ten Commandments,

with the view of showing them the holiness of God, their duty, and their fearful condition under the curse for breaking it; the impossibility of justification before God by their own works, and, of course, the necessity of fleeing to Christ, the hope set before them; and, finally, the faith, love, gratitude, and obedience they owed to Christ for his obedience and suffering under the curse. I afterwards found that these sermons were not in vain."

CHAPTER VII.

SECOND YEAR'S LABOURS. 1787–1788.

"Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?" Isa. lviii. 6.

"A LITTLE before winter set in, I went to Merigomish, a small settlement about ten miles, or rather fifteen miles, east from Pictou, in consequence of an invitation, preached to them on Sabbath, and visited several of the families. Having no prospect of a minister themselves, they begged of me to visit them as often as I could, and, as far as depended upon them, they put themselves under my charge. I promised to do for them what I could, and accordingly I gave them annually less or more supply for nearly thirty years, when they got a minister to themselves—the Rev. William Patrick. This application from without the bounds of my own congregation was some consolation to me. Indeed, I might be called the minister of the north coast of Nova Scotia, rather than of Pictou, for at that time there was no other minister along the whole north coast, except one Church of England clergyman near the east end of the Province."

Among the first settlers in Merigomish were some of the Hector's passengers, but the greater part of them were disbanded soldiers. From this it may be understood that they were neither so steady in their habits, nor so attentive to the duties of morality and religion as the people in the other sections of the county. In fact they were an extremely wild set.

In particular, drinking prevailed to an extent which is now almost incredible. An amusing anecdote is told illustrative of this. On going there once to preach, a man applied to him to baptize a child for him. Before consenting, the Doctor made some enquiries among some of his neighbours as to his moral character. He received the most ample testimonials as to his good conduct. "But," said the Doctor, "does he not drink? I have heard that he sometimes takes a spree." "Oh yes," was the reply, "but *we all do that.*" Until the arrival of a second minister in the county, the Doctor could only give them occasional sermons, but after that event, they became part of his regular charge, and received a fifth of his services, until the increase of the other sections of his congregation obliged him to relinquish the care of them. They were then for several years vacant, receiving occasional sermons from him and other members of Presbytery, until the settlement of Mr. Patrick in 1815. His labours among them were successful, so that a great change took place in the habits and morals of the community. Yet owing we suppose to the partial ministerial service he was able to give them, and the strength and inveteracy of their old evil habits, the change was not so complete as in other sections, nor did the people for a long time seem as thoroughly imbued with the spirit of religion as the inhabitants of other portions of the county.

"In November I received the first money for preaching in Pictou—a part of the first year's stipend. I lived a year and a quarter here without receiving a shilling, and almost without giving any. I ought to have received forty pounds of cash for the preceding year (with forty pounds worth of produce), but twenty-seven was all that I received. The truth is, it could not be gotten. The price of wheat was then six shillings, and some of the people offered wheat for three shillings, to make up their share of the stipend, but could not obtain it. Almost all the twenty-seven pounds were due by me to some necessary engagements of charity which I was under. My board, which was my chief expense, was paid from the produce part of the

stipend, which was not so difficult to be obtained as the cash part. But even of the produce part there was nigh ten pounds deficient.

"I plainly saw that I need never expect my stipend to be punctually paid; indeed, scarcely anything is punctually paid in this part of the world. It is a bad habit, ill to forego. But my mind was so knit to them, by the hope of doing good to their souls, that I resolved to be content with what they could give. Little did I then think that I would see the day that Pictou would pay £1,000 per annum to support the gospel. I suppose I have lost £1,000 in stipends; but I have now ten times more property than when I came to Pictou."

We must here give some account of the payment of stipend at that time, and during almost the whole course of his ministry. In the first place, the mode of raising the amount was by assessment. How it was for the first year or two we are uncertain, but from an early period this plan was adopted under the following pledge:

"We promise to pay to James MacGregor, minister, one hundred pounds currency yearly, one half in cash and one half in produce, as wheat, oats, butter, pork, viz., on the first Tuesday of March, yearly. And we hereby agree that there be a yearly Congregational meeting on the second Tuesday of July, to assess for and collect the stipends, as we are all to pay in proportion to our polls and estates. We agree that there be four or five assessors and collectors."

And the following bond of adherence was subscribed by those who had not been parties to the original call:

"We the underwritten hereby declare our adherence to the obligation subscribed by the older settlers of this river for paying the minister's stipend, that is, conjointly with the former subscribers, we promise to pay to James MacGregor, the sum of one hundred pounds yearly, one half in cash, one half in produce, as wheat, oats, butter, pork, on the first Tuesday of March yearly, by an equal assessment upon our polls and estates.

Witness our hands this sixteenth day of December, one thousand eight hundred and three, at the East River of Pictou."

The assessment was made on their land, cattle, and polls, or adult male heads, one for example being at the following rate: Polls, 5*s.* each, cattle, 1*s.* 3*d.*, sheep, 1*d.*, each hundred acres of land, 1*s.* 3*d.* We will give a specimen of one of the assess bills, as we think it will be deemed a curiosity in the present day.

"Assess Bill of the Minister's Stipend from 31st July 1803, to the 31st July 1804. West Branch."

No.	Names.	Polls.	Land.	Cattle.	Sheep.	£.	*s.*	*d.*
	William Fraser	1	250	2	7	.....	10	11
	Allan MacQuarry	1	200	3	3	.....	11	4½
	Alex. Dunbar	1	500	7	10	1	...	5
	Wm. Dunbar	1	325	6	5	.....	16	9½
5	James Cameron	1	400	7	12	.. ...	19	3
	Donald Chisholm	1	400	5	12	.....	16	9
	Hector MacLean	1	400	5	8	.....	16	7
	Alex. MacDonald	1	300	3	6	.....	12	9
	Alex. MacIntosh	1	500	5	1	.....	17	6½
10	Finlay MacIntosh	1	.....	..	...	.....	5	...
	Farquhar Falconer	1	400	5	1	.....	16	3½
	Hugh Fraser, Meadows	1	350	6	12	.....	17	4½
	Thomas Munro	1	300	6	14	.....	16	10
	Hugh Fraser, Carpenter	1	200	..	...	.....	7	6
15	Henry Burnside	1	100	5	14	.....	13	1
	David MacLean	1	400	7	15	.....	19	4½
	John MacLeod	1	300	4	9	.....	14	1½
	Robert Clark	1	300	6	8	.....	16	7
	Alex. MacDonald, Jr.	1	.....	..	...	.....	5	...
	With twelve others at the same rate.							
31		31	5625	82	137	£16	13	6¾

The following is the summing up for the whole congregation:

179 Polls at 5*s.*	£44	15	0
761 Cattle and land at 1*s.* 3*d.*	47	11	3
798 Sheep at ½*d.* each.	1	13	3
	£93	19	6
Due Mr. MacGregor by the district to avoid fractions.	16	0	
	£94	15	6

Due the district since last year.	£ 1 1 2
The harbours ¼*d.*	4 3 4
	5 4 6
	100 0 0
	£94 15 6

In making these assessments there was sometimes difficulty in adjusting the proportion due by the different sections. Thus we have on the back of the assess bills, such notes as the following, "East River, Pictou, June 1st, 1801:—Sir, I made the *Sess-Bill* long ago, but the upper part of the Settlement says, they will not pay you till they get better convenience of the sermon, and I did not send it down till now, and you will excuse me;—Your humble Servant, I. C." "And again, I, H. F., have assessed all them that is above Angus MacQuarry, and we want our share of the sermons at Charles MacIntosh's, as we will pay, till such time as we will agree about the meeting-house."

The plan of raising the stipends by assessment was liable to objection, and in practice attended with a number of difficulties. Accordingly, in the year 1807 an attempt was made to raise the minister's stipend by voluntary subscription under the following heading:—

"The manner of raising the minister's stipend by assessment being attended by several inconveniences, and it being thought probable, that it may be more conveniently raised by subscription, we, the subscribers, in order to make a fair trial, which of the two ways is best, have agreed to a subscription for three years. Wherefore we promise to pay or cause to be paid yearly, for three years, to the Rev. James MacGregor for his ministerial labours, the sums annexed to each of our names respectively at his house, on the first Tuesday of March, one-half in cash, and one-half in merchantable produce, at market price. Done at Pictou, October 26th, 1807."

The result of this effort was a subscription on the Upper Settlement, East River, of £56.0.2, and on the Lower Settlement of £56.19.0. But assessments were resumed as early as the year 1810. In the year 1815, however, the system of voluntary subscription was at length finally adopted under the following heading :—

" On account of the complaints and difficulties attending assessment, the Congregational meeting in July last resolved to raise the minister's stipend by voluntary subscription, the subscription to be reduced or changed after three years, as the Congregational meeting shall direct. Of the half belonging to the (Upper) Settlements, amounting to seventy-five pounds currency, we, subscribers, promise to pay our shares annually, for three years, on the first Tuesday of March, to the Rev James MacGregor, for his ministerial labours among us, viz., the sums annexed to our names. N. B.—It was agreed by the Congregational meeting, that if the subscription should amount to more than seventy-five pounds, the overplus shall be deducted from the sums of those who subscribe highest, according to their circumstances, as the men appointed for that purpose shall decide. The sermons at the East and West Branch meeting houses shall be in proportion to the subscription belonging to each, March 1st, 1815."

Such were the plans adopted for raising the amount. With these there was not so much reason to complain, but in every other respects, the arrangements were most deficient. During the greater part of his ministry the amount promised was entirely inadequate, even if it had been regularly and fully paid. After the breaking out of the war the prices of almost every article were very high, flour being often as high as five pounds per barrel, and upwards, and yet his salary for a long time was only £100 currency, $400. Even if this amount had been regularly and punctually paid, it would have been entirely insufficient for his comfortable maintenance, but this was very far from being the case. There were no regular times of payment observed. There were dates fixed at which the amount

ought to be paid, but nobody thought the worse of himself, if he were weeks and even months behind the time. His first year had expired in July, yet it was November before any part of the salary was paid, and though their arrangements were not always so bad, and though there were always individuals who paid with some regard to the stated times appointed, yet more or less of this irregularity continued till the end of his life.

But the deficiencies were no less remarkable as to the amount. There was no sense of joint responsibility, except in the apportioning of the amount among the different sections of the congregation. As a congregation they did not feel any obligation to raise a fixed sum, but each man thought he had done remarkably well, if he had paid the amount of his own assessment. Thus he received the contributions of good payers, but those of the bad he had to lose altogether. It must be observed that the large majority of his congregation were Highlanders, who are said "to have a decided preference for gratis preaching." They had generally belonged to the Established Church in Scotland, where they had not been accustomed directly to contribute to the support of the gospel, and thus they were wanting to some extent in the inclination, and entirely in the habit of discharging that duty. Besides a large proportion of his flock continued to be new settlers, who had not the ability to pay if they were ever so willing. In this way a large amount was lost entirely. On the first year when the salary was only eighty pounds nominally, there were ten pounds short of the produce part and thirteen of the cash. The same thing continued every year. Among his accounts we find such entries as the following, regarding individual subscriptions. "A M'K. owes 14*s*, am willing to forgive." "All due by former lists and more, but I forgive it." "With 6*s*. 8*d*., perhaps to be forgiven." "I forgive 6*s*. 1½*d*," "Paid, that is, forgiven." In this way he might well say that he had lost upwards of £1000 of stipends.

In regard to the collecting the stipend, another circumstance must be mentioned, that during the principal part of his ministry the greater part of the accounts for stipend were kept by

himself. During the first few years they were kept by the late John Patterson thus far, that a good proportion of the produce contributions were paid into his hands, and he sent them to market, or otherwise disposed of them, supplying the Doctor, in return, with goods or it might be some cash. But after his marriage, all accounts were kept by himself. If there were such officers as collectors or committee of management, it was but little they did, for he had still to deal with every individual contributor in his congregation. This involved a great amount of trouble, rendering it necessary that he should keep accounts with one or two hundred individuals, for sums from 5*s.* upwards, and receiving payments in a quarter of veal from one, a cake of maple-sugar from a second, or a bushel of wheat from a third.

We have before us John Patterson's account up till the time of his marriage; nine years after his arrival, and a few of the charges are curious. Witness the following items, with the exception of the first, all at the close of the account:

	£	*s.*	*d.*
"To a black girl, by Matthew Harris,	50	0	0
" Notes of hand and other accounts, delivered some time ago to amount,	76	12	7
" List of accounts rendered since the above list,	129	5	1
" Deficiencies as per account,	19	14	5
" Reduction on £83.0.0. worth of wheat, from 6*s.* per bushel, to 4*s.* 6*d.*,	20	15	0
" Reduction on £30 worth of wheat from 5*s.* to 4*s.* 6*d.*	3	0	0

Some of our readers may have heard of stipend being paid in some curious ways, but we are certain that the first item in the above list will be something new to them, at least as occurring this side of Mason & Dixon's line. We shall have some explanations to give regarding it presently. In this account we must notice the large deficiencies, not only the amount stated as such, but also the large amount of accounts and notes of hand,

amounting to over £200, the greater part of which we may safely presume was never paid.

Then the real value of the produce part of the payments was far short of the nominal. This appears on the above, where there appears a discount of nearly 25 per cent, on that portion of the payments. We have before us piles of his accounts, which are full of such credits as the following :—"C. M'K., 10½lbs. tallow." "P. G., 3 bushels of wheat." "I. T., 2*s.* 6*d.* in birds, and 13lbs. in butter, and 19lbs. sugar." "D. F., 26¼ weight of butter; gave him a Gaelic Bible." "P. F., paid in 1787, dogs,* 6*s.*; 1788, cash, 6*s.*; 1789, wheat, 11*s.* 6*d.*" "W. owes paid by a sheep," while another has the following credit, "paid two brooms." Now, while many such payments were the full money value, at which they were estimated, yet many others were far from being so, and on the whole such a mode of payment was far from equal to cash. Often an inferior article was brought, an article which was unsaleable in the owner's hands,—at a time when the minister did not need it, or could not convert it into a profitable use,—and yet he was expected to take it as a matter of course, and not only so, but to allow for it the highest price. He could not say much about its quality, or refuse it altogether, or chaffer about the price, without the risk of giving a serious affront. And the length to which some would go in taking advantage of him may appear in such credits, as the following, "12lbs. ram-mutton," or "36lbs. beech-pork."

When all other means failed, persons had an easy and never failing resource, viz., giving their notes. Such was the credit system then prevailing, that persons actually considered, that they had paid their accounts, when they had given their notes. A person once meeting another asked him where he had been. "Oh, I have been up at Mr. Mortimer's, *paying my account.*" "Indeed, how did you pay it?" "I gave him my note." In the lists of arrears we find a number marked "paid by note."

* Dog-irons, we presume, articles employed in wood-fires, for supporting the stick while burning.

Few of these would be paid. A person has told me that he has seen him looking over his old papers, and as he came across such notes quietly putting them into the fire.

Though these notes were legal obligations, it would never have answered for him to enforce them by the civil law. We may mention here that many years afterwards an attempt was made to enforce payments for the minister's salary—not by himself, for he would rather have lost all, than have pressed any person, but by the collectors on his behalf. For the honour of the voluntary principle, it may be mentioned that the effort was attended with most injurious consequences. Not only did the man who was prosecuted become his most determined enemy, but it lost him, for a time at least, one of his staunchest supporters. When the man was sued he came with a poor story to the Doctor, who with his usual kindness forgave the amount, and at his request gave him a receipt. The Doctor enjoined him to show this without delay to the collector, who had taken out the writ against him, in order that the process might be stopped. Instead of doing this, the man kept the receipt until the day of trial, and then after the collector had stated the case, produced the receipt. It was natural enough that the collector should feel annoyed, but being a man of high temper, though a great friend of the Doctor's, he was highly indignant at him, although he was perfectly innocent in the matter, and it was some time, notwithstanding all the explanations he received, before his wrath was averted. It may be mentioned that the whole question of prosecuting for ministers' stipend was tried in another case before the courts of law, when it was found that the laws of the Province did not sustain the practice, in reference to dissenters from the Church of England.

As we have referred to the modes of paying ministers' salary, it is but just to remark, that the whole business of the country was at that time conducted in a similar manner. The system of credit universally prevailed, and there were no regular times of payment. This continued for many years, even when money became abundant, and, strange to say! all parties loved to have

it so. The purchasers hesitated not to take goods freely, the day of payment being so far off, they felt as if they were getting them without paying for them. It seemed so easy a way of getting what they wanted, that any system of ready payment they would have regarded as harsh and cruel. On the other hand, traders actually encouraged people to go in debt, either for the sake of retaining their custom, or the power which it enabled them to exercise over them. The credit system would not have been so bad if there had been regular times of settlement. But so far from this being the case, it was often difficult to get an account from the merchant, particularly if he thought it was to be settled. He considered it his interest to keep persons in debt to him, that he might oblige them to bring their articles to him, and that thus he might be enabled to have them at his own price, while at the same time he charged the highest price for his goods.

The system was a ruinous one for all parties. The farmer was led into extravagance, purchasing articles with which he might have easily dispensed, and which he would not have purchased, but that the time of payment faded so far into the distant perspective, as scarcely to be perceptible. He made no effort to clear off pecuniary liabilities, and sat easy under a load of accumulated debt. Many thus became involved in such a way, that they were scarcely out of debt till the end of their days, many had to mortgage their farms, which in many instances were never redeemed. On the other hand, the merchant had a large amount due him according to his books, and fancied himself making money. But when he came to settle up his business, the pleasing delusion was dissipated. The sums due could not be had when wanted, and after distressing the people by legal proceedings, many of them were never paid at all, and the merchant was sometimes ruined, while his books presented an array of figures, which showed him to be a rich man.

Besides, the system induced a lax sense of obligation regarding pecuniary engagements, which to some extent has continued to the present day. The merchant would not pay the country

people cash for their produce, but would insist on their taking their payment in goods, and those at the highest price. The farmer felt this an injustice to him, as the goods were not equivalent to their rated money value, he learned to regard the interests of the merchant as opposed to his own, and came to feel himself justified in evading obligations—in palming off inferior articles, or in taking advantage as he could. This became so habitual with many, that it extended to all their dealings—with the minister as well as others; but the latter was under the most unfavourable circumstances, as he could not higgle or dispute about the justice of charges made, or the quality of articles presented. Altogether we have no hesitation in saying, that next to the free introduction of rum, nothing has been so injurious to the social and moral interests of the Province as the credit system so long prevalent.

In this account of the payment of stipend and of the mode of dealing in the country, we have rather described the state of things some years later. We therefore return to the time at which his narrative was interrupted, to remark, that here as before, "his deep poverty abounded to the riches of his liberality." From the very first he was distinguished by his charity. During the early part of his ministry there came a spring, which proved very hard upon the poor settlers. Soon after he had received a payment on account of stipend, Donald MacKay, with whom he lodged, entering his room on a Saturday, found him with several small piles of money before him. "Ah," said Donald, in his free and off-hand manner, "is that what you are at, counting your money when you should be studying your sermons?" "Oh," said he in reply, "this is for such a person, and this is for such another, to enable them to buy seed." "But," said Donald, "they will never pay you back." "Well, if they don't, I can want it." Those who were acquainted with the circumstances used to say, that not one half of it would ever have been repaid.

But the most distinguished act of charity perhaps of his whole life took place in the first year of his ministry, and is re-

ferred to in the paragraph quoted above. He there remarks regarding the money part of his first year's stipend, "Almost all the twenty-seven pounds were due by me to some necessary engagements of charity which I was under." The act of charity here referred to we venture to say has rarely been equalled, and as he so slightly refers to it, we must describe it more in detail. Strange as it may appear at this date, the settlers who had come from the Old Colonies to several parts of Nova Scotia had brought with them slaves, and retained them as such for a number of years.* Among others, the late Matthew Harris was the owner of a coloured girl, who afterwards went by the name of Die Mingo, and a mulatto man, named Martin. The question of the slave trade had just previously to the Doctor's leaving Scotland begun to agitate the public mind of Britain. He had entered heart and soul into the discussion, and now when an opportunity was afforded, he gave practical proof of his benevolence and love of freedom. He immediately interested himself to secure the liberty of these unfortunate individuals, and for this purpose actually agreed to pay £50 for the freedom of Die. Of the £27 received in money the first year, £20 was paid toward this object, and for a year or two, a large portion of his produce payments went to pay the balance.

The poor creature was extremely grateful, and continued till her death to have the warmest feelings of veneration and affection for him, which feelings were retained by her family after her. She was afterward married to George Mingo, also a coloured person, who had served during the first American war. They were both in full communion with the congregation of Pictou, till their death, and esteemed as very pious persons, such as might have served as models for Uncle Tom and Aunt Chloe. They, as was customary at that time, used to travel round to the various sacraments, and I have been informed by persons now old, that when children, though black people were then generally despised, yet George and Die every where commanded respect. She died some years ago, and the late Rev.

* See Appendix D.

John MacKinlay, her pastor, used to state that he had attended the deathbeds of but few persons, from whom he had received more satisfaction.

By the Doctor's influence, Mr. Harris was also persuaded to give Martin his freedom after a certain term of good service. He afterward married a woman belonging to River John, of Swiss descent, and removed to St. Mary's where he had a family. He bore an excellent character, and seemed also to have profited spiritually by the Doctor's instructions. On one of his missionary excursions, the latter was afterwards at his house, and baptized his family. He subsequently removed to the United States.

The Doctor also relieved a woman who was in bondage for a term of years, paying some nine or ten pounds for her freedom. He also paid for the board and education of her daughter, but she proved a worthless character.

Yet with that freedom from ostentation which characterized him in all his good deeds, he never mentioned the circumstances to any of his friends at home, except barely alluding to it in a letter to his father. One of his relatives, writing to him, says, "Your father is at a loss, you did not signify in your last to him your end for giving away £20 for some people in hardship, nor what they were to you. He wishes to know." But his good friend, Mr. Buist, having obtained intelligence of what he had done, took measures to give it publicity, as will appear by the following extract of a letter from him dated March 18th 1791.

"I am much obliged for the six copies,* but you were not so good as to tell me you had freed some slaves, but Mr. Fraser told me you had done so as to two. I got Mr. Elmsley to tea, he did not know of this, but spoke of an old woman very useful among the sick. I thought such goodness should not be concealed, and sent to the *Glasgow Advertiser*, and had inserted the following, 'The Rev. Mr. James MacGregor, Gaelic Missionary from the Antiburgher Presbytery of Glasgow to

* Of his pamphlet on slavery.

Pictou, Nova Scotia, has published in that country against the slave trade, and has since recommended his doctrine by a noble and disinterested philanthropy, in his devoting a part of his small stipend for purchasing the liberty of some slaves. Such is the modesty of that gentleman, that he has not given his friends in this country the pleasure of this news, so honourable to his society and to the Highland emigrants from Scotland; but authentic information is received that he has purchased and liberated two young persons, adding to the favour education at school, and that he is in treaty for the liberty of an old woman, who may be very useful as a nurse to the sick.' I hope I have not offended, nor will I beg pardon unless I have sent a false account or misapprehension. It was copied in the newspapers through Britain, and your name is famous. Luckily it appeared in that Glasgow paper that the resolutions and subscriptions by David Dale for £10 and other Glasgow gentlemen to the amount of £170, for carrying the Bill for abolishing the slave trade appeared, and was just placed a few lines before their advertisement requesting others to subscribe. I have virtually approved your book."

The letter from which the above is taken has the following in short hand on the back, "Received this on the 31st of May, read the account of the advertisement with trembling and (sweat?)"

It may be mentioned that the question of slavery was afterward settled in Nova Scotia in the following way. Difficulties arose in an action of trover brought for the recovery of a runaway slave, which induced the opinion that the courts of law would not recognize a state of slavery as having a lawful existence in the country, and although this question never received a judicial decision, and although particular clauses of some of the early acts of the Province corroborate the idea that slaves might be held, yet the slaves were all emancipated.*

As we have referred to the subject of slavery, we shall here give an account of his controversy on the subject, though it

* Halliburton, vol. ii. p. 280.

did not take place till the following year, (1788). At the time of his intercourse with the Truro brethren on the subject of union already referred to, he learned that the Rev. Mr. Cock had been the owner of two female slaves, a mother and daughter. We have been informed that he obtained the mother as a gift from a person in Cornwallis, when on a visit there. At all events he afterwards sold her in consequence of her unruly conduct. The daughter he seems to have obtained by purchase. There is no evidence that Mr. Cock treated either of them otherwise than with Christian kindness. Indeed such was his gentleness of disposition, that it could not be otherwise. But to the Doctor, fired with the controversy then agitating Britain on the slave trade, the very idea of a minister of Christ retaining one of his fellow beings in bondage was revolting, and he made this a special ground of refusing all communion with a Presbytery, which tolerated such conduct in one of its members. He also addressed to Mr. Cock a long and severe letter on the subject. Though called a letter it was more like a pamphlet. This was received with a sort of bewildering surprise. Immediately after perusing it, Mr. Cock took it over to a friend, one of the Archibalds, who had also a slave. What was the result of their joint deliberations we know not. But in a short time they were still more astonished by the appearance in print of a similar letter entitled, "Letter to a clergyman, urging him to set free a black girl he held in slavery." This publication excited great attention. The members of the Truro Presbytery were very indignant, as well as many of their friends,* but many throughout Colchester not only read it with deep interest, but cordially approved of its contents.

We have published this letter among his remains as we are certain that it will be read with interest, not only for its subject matter, but also for its style and as a curiosity of the times. The spirit of this production will doubtless be regarded as defi-

* On one occasion the Rev. James Monroe coming in among the brethren with a few copies in his pocket, and letting them know what they were, had his coat tail torn in a scramble for them.

cient in Christian charity even by many who approve of its principles. Indeed it presents a remarkable contrast to that gentleness of spirit which characterized his later years, and must be taken as exhibiting the fervour of youthful feeling. In his subsequent letters he explains, that his strong language was meant to apply to the acts of buying and selling our fellow men, and not to Mr. Cock personally, and that in what he had said he did not refer to his motives. Whatever may be said of the spirit of this production, we venture to say as to its matter, that it contains, in a clear and forcible style, a thorough discussion of the principles at issue. Though other writers may have supplied many additional facts regarding the nature and workings of slavery, there is very little to be added upon the Scriptural question. It may indeed, be objected, that he confounds slave trading and slave holding, but both involve the same principles.

Mr. Cock was a man of very mild temper, and sat quietly under the castigation he received, but the Rev. David Smith, of Londonderry, being of a more pugnacious turn of mind, took up the cudgels, and several communications passed between them. The most of this correspondence has perished, but we have in our possession two long communications of Mr. Smith's containing a full exhibition of his views. We may give a summary of his arguments. Indeed they are just such as are commonly urged by the friends of slavery in every age. The following are the principal—that the relation of master and bond servant implied no such power on the part of the master over his slaves, as over his cattle, but that they were merely in the situation of indentured servants, and that all that those who purchased them did, was to secure a title to their services in lawful commands for life, coupled with an obligation to instruct them in the doctrines and duties of religion—that the slaves had been originally sold by public authority in the states from which they came, having duly forfeited their liberty—that Abraham had servants born in his house and bought with his money—that there were slaves in the early

Christian Church, as appears from Paul's directions to masters and servants in the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, from Paul's directions to Timothy, 1 Epis. vi. 1, 2, and also from 1 Cor. vii. 20, 21—that Paul sent back Onesimus a runaway slave to Philemon his master—that the relation is of the same kind as parent and child, master and servant, ruler and subject, and that cruelties inflicted in particular instances, did not argue against the relation in one case more than in the other—and that the immediate emancipation of slaves would be for their injury rather than their good.

In reference to this particular case, he argues that Mr. Cock, so far from being guilty of any ill usage of his slave, treated her in the most Christian manner. We give his statement :

"I can assure you that Mr. Cock's girl never was nor is still wanted by him as a slave in the sense you understand it, but merely as a bond or indentured servant, and from the very first time he got her and her mother, he from time to time told me and many others, that he had no intention of always detaining them, if they behaved themselves well. And to my own knowledge, they were, and his girl still is, more tenderly dealt with, than the most of hired servants in these parts.

"Notwithstanding your confident assertions, I see no inconsistency in your Rev. Brother's (Mr. C.) having ground to say, 'He hath not shunned to declare all the counsel of God,' and as a Christian discharged his duty to his fellow creatures as faithfully as he could, and at the same time retaining his bond servant; for I charitably hope that he is far from attempting to lord it over her conscience, but endeavours to instruct her in the same manner as he doth his own children, having given and daily giving her the same opportunities with the rest of his family both as to the more private and public means of instruction. And if all that keep bond servants had been or were disposed to treat them in the same manner that he hath done his—they would have reason to esteem it a happy privilege, that ever they came under the direction and protection of such masters. What baleful influence his example hath had or may have upon others I cannot see.

"What were his motives or reasons for disposing of the girl's mother, he best knoweth, but as far as I can learn she turned so unruly, sullen, and stubborn, as to threaten to put hands on her own life, in which case she certainly forfeited her liberty, and so he disposed of her to another, who had been more accustomed to the management of such; and though she attained to enjoy a licentious liberty, as the event verified, yet she again made a desperate attempt both on her own life and the life of the

fruit of her womb, which laid her new master under the necessity of confining her more than ever."

Mr. Smith also shows considerable adroitness, though not always fairness, in catching at particular statements and expressions in the Doctor's letter, as for example, when the latter solemnly charged Mr. Cock to liberate his slave, because till he did so, none of his services could be acceptable to God, he (Mr. S.) represents this as teaching the doctrine of securing acceptance with God by our own good works. The following specimen of his argumentation is of a similar character. "Did not your own conduct in purchasing a negro girl make you as deeply guilty as the Rev. Mr. Cock? It is in vain to plead, you purchased her freedom, for if it was such a heinous sin in Mr. Harris to keep her; is it not as heinous a crime in you to pay for her freedom? According to your principles her price is the wages of iniquity, and surely the giver is as deeply guilty as the receiver."

He also complains much of the bitter spirit of the Doctor's letter, and accuses him of "exciting a spirit of faction and party, respecting such things as neither directly respect the faith and practice of the church." He also indulges in personal recrimination, which we need not farther notice.

We have given the facts on this subject, so far as we have been able to gather them, as from the prominence which the affair had in his life at that time, it could not be omitted, and because we regard it as a curious episode in the history of the Province. We have done so with no feelings against the other party concerned. Mr. Cock was undoubtedly a good man, and acted on his light, and when we consider the large number of excellent men, who even in the present day defend slavery, we need not wonder, that a minister at that time should have followed a practice, the wrongfulness of which had only begun to be exposed. The girl who from that date was commonly called Deal MacGregor, in consequence of the Doctor's speaking of her in his letter as his sister, continued with Mr. Cock as long as he lived. It is commonly said by those who knew the facts of

the case, that it had been well for his family, if she had never been admitted into it.

The subjects we have now been discussing have carried us ahead of his narrative. We therefore return to it.

"As soon as the meeting-houses were built, the people set themselves to make roads to them, that they might be as accessible as possible by land. But these roads were nothing more than very narrow openings through the woods, by cutting down the bushes and trees that lay in their line of direction, and laying logs, with the upper side hewed, along swampy places and over brooks, which could not be passed dry, by way of bridge. The stumps and roots, the heights and hollows, were left as they had been. The chief advantage of this was, that it prevented people from going astray in the woods. During winter, the roads and meeting-houses both were totally useless; for the preaching was in dwelling-houses, with fire.

"I followed the same plan this winter that I did the winter before; I took the opportunity of visiting and examining, and did so with much the same success, for with many an evident progress was discernible. As I went round from river to river, I saw much diligence in attending public ordinances; many taking pleasure in religious conversation, and numbers under great anxiety about the state of their souls; but numbers were also careless and ignorant, and not a few were irritated.

"When summer arrived, I had to set my face to the dispensation of the sacrament of the Supper, without an assistant. The best members of my congregation were willing to have the assistance of one or both of the Colchester ministers, but I could not get over my scruples to invite them, and happy was it for me that they (the congregation) were so temperate. It was no small grief to me that I could not accept of the assistance of my brethren, but, except to a few individuals who were previously irritated, it caused no offence in the congregation. They were more sorry for my own fatigue than for any thing else.

"The session appointed the sacrament to be dispensed on

the 27th of July, a little above the head of the tide on the Middle River, the most central place that could be found. It was a beautiful green on the left bank of the river, sheltered by a lofty wood and winding bank. There, in the open air, the holy Supper was administered annually, as long as I was alone. Though it is thirty years since its last administration there, I never see the place without an awful and delightful recollection of the religious exercises of my youth, and of my young congregation, when, if I mistake not, we had happier communion with God than now, when our worldly enjoyments are ten times greater. Jer. ii. 2, 'Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.'

"The day for dispensing the sacrament was published five weeks beforehand, that there might be sufficient time for examining intending communicants; and they were all particularly examined. It was agreed that the preceding Thursday should be observed as a day of public humiliation and prayer for preparation; and that the English should be first this year, and the Gaelic the next year, and so on alternately. On the humiliation-day I earnestly exhorted the congregation to examine themselves impartially and thoroughly, to renounce hypocrisy and self-righteousness, to lay hold on the hope set before them in the gospel, and implore the gracious and merciful presence of God on the ensuing occasion, as I was a young and inexperienced minister, and the most of them were to be young and inexperienced communicants; and the first dispensation of the sacrament might have lasting effects of good or evil. I preached first in English, then in Gaelic, on the Thursday, the Saturday, and the Monday. On Sabbath I preached the action-sermon, fenced the tables, consecrated the elements, and served the first two tables in English, at which all the English communicants sat. The singing in English continued till all the Highlanders, who were waiting, filled the table. I then served two tables,

gave directions, and preached the evening sermon in Gaelic. The work of the day was pretty equally divided between the two languages. But the Highlanders wanted the action-sermon, and the Lowlanders the evening sermon. This, however, could not be helped, but the want was partly supplied by previous instructions and directions.

"This was the first sacred Supper dispensed in Pictou; and though some, no doubt, communicated unworthily, yet I trust that a great majority were worthy. There have been some instances of apostasy, but they are few. Four-fifths of them have given in their account to the great Judge, and I hope few of them made shipwreck of faith; many of them adorned their profession, living and dying. The number of communicants was one hundred and thirty, of whom one hundred and two were heads of families, ten widowers and widows, living with their children, eight unmarried men, and ten strangers from Merigomish."

We shall speak more particularly hereafter of the dispensation of the Supper in the early years of his ministry. It may be interesting to add here such an account as we can give of the discourses preached on the occasion. For several Sabbaths previous he preached with reference to the observance of the Institution. The following are some of the subjects: on June 14th, 1 Cor. x. 16, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?" 1 Cor. x. 17—26: on June 28th, 1 Cor. v. 6, 7, 8. Two discourses; July 5th, 1 Cor. xi. 28, "But let a man examine himself and so let him eat of this bread and drink of this cup;" and Psal. xv.; on July 12, 1 Cor. 11–28,—Psal. xxvi. 1–7. On the Saturday previous to the dispensation of the ordinance he preached on Josh. iii. 5, "Sanctify yourselves; for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you;" and on Psal. x. 17, "He will prepare your heart." His action sermon was on Song ii. 16, "My beloved is mine and I am his;" and on the evening of Sabbath his text was Psal. cxvi. 12, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" We find a

sermon on Luke vi. 40, "The disciple is not above his master, but every one that is perfect shall be as his master," marked, "intended for Monday;" while on the Sabbath succeeding he preached on Psal. cxvi. 18, "I will pay my vows unto the Lord, now in the presence of all his people," and lectured on verses 12—19 of the same Psalm. It will be seen that he occupied much time and labour in preparatory discourses. More of this was necessary, than would have otherwise been, in consequence of the preaching being in different places, and it being requisite on each day to have one sermon in English and one in Gaelic. We shall give an outline of one of his Saturday sermons, and of his action-sermon :—

"Josh. iii. 5.—Sanctify yourselves, for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you."

"I. Of the wonders which God will do.

1. He will let you see the evil of sin. Christ the beloved Son of God was brought by it to death. This was done by your thoughts, words, and actions. If you can understand the whole sufferings of Christ, you may understand all the evil and all the desert of sin.

2. He will show the severity of God's justice. He would not be satisfied with thirty-three years' obedience. He required all the sufferings of his soul till his body was broken. "Awake, O Sword, &c." God loved him and was gracious to him, but that would not do. What will become of self-flattering sinners?

3. The love of God: of the Father in giving his Son whom he infinitely loved to be broken for us, and the Son in suffering for us, and the Holy Ghost in coming into such hellish hearts to prepare us for eating the broken body of Christ.

4. The virtue of Christ's blood, to take away the guilt of sin, to give peace to the conscience, in spite of sin and hell, to purify the heart, to strengthen it for God's service, to fill it with the joy and peace of believing, to prevent our fears and exceed our hopes, to feed our souls.

II. Of our sanctification.

1. This says that we should understand something of God's holiness. He is so holy that he cannot keep communion with sinners—that the angels cover their faces, and that no unclean thing is meet to come before him.

2. That we are sensible of our unholiness, our original and actual transgressions, and that by these we are altogether as an unclean thing, a lump of hell.

3. That we are to depend on the Spirit for sanctification. We cannot sanctify ourselves. The Spirit is promised to sanctify us, and there is

influence in Christ's blood to sanctify us, and we must apply to this in the diligent use of means.

4. We are to retire from the world, and to examine our hearts, that we may part with whatever displeases a holy God, and that we may get a suitable frame of spirit to attend upon him. We are to cast out pride, the world, unbelief, malice, and vain thoughts. We are to be in a humble, spiritual, fixed, loving, lively frame.

III. Of the reasons of it.

1. Because of the deceit of our hearts, which would outwit us if we are not diligent, 'The heart is deceitful above all things.'

2. God's jealousy for his holiness. He would break forth upon us. Ex. xix. 19, 21, 24.

3. Because God delights himself in them that are sanctified. Psa. lxxxvi. 2. 'Holiness becomes God's house.'"

Outline of action sermon on Song ii. 16. "My beloved is mine and I am his."

"I. My beloved is mine.

1. His righteousness is mine to pardon my sins, and make me be accounted as righteous in God's sight, Jer. xxiii. 6; 2 Cor. v. 21. From blackness of hell he will make me fair as heaven. Isa. lxi. 10.

2. All his gracious promises are mine to quicken, sanctify, and save me. Faith puts all the promises of grace in my possession, and then all the grace in the promise is my property. Quickening grace, John v. 25, reviving grace, Hos. xiv. 7, sanctifying grace, Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, saving grace, Isa. xlv. 17, grace to overcome sin, Satan, and the world, 2 Cor. ix. 8; Phil. iv. 19.

3. His Father is mine, John xx. 17, to pity me, Psa. ciii. 13, 14, to protect me, Jer. iii. 4, to accomplish all the promises of the covenant of grace, Psa. lxxxix. 4; John xvi. 27, to be my portion for ever, Psa. lxxiii.

4. His Spirit is mine, Rom. viii. 9, to teach me to pray, Rom. viii. 26, 27, to give me knowledge, Eph. i. 17, to sanctify me, 2 Thess. ii. 13, to apply a complete redemption to me, John xvi. 14.

5. My beloved's person is mine, and all that he hath is mine. He is mine as God, and mine as Mediator; his divine perfections are mine, as power, wisdom, and holiness. The obedience and sufferings of the human nature are mine, to free me from the wrath to come. As Mediator he is mine, to be my example to which I must strive to be more and more conformed, and to be mine eternal portion.

II. And I am his.

1. All my sins are his, Isa. liii. 6, my original sin and all my actual sins are his by imputation, 1 Pet. ii. 24, and so the punishment of them is his, Isa. liii. 4, 5; 1 Pet. iii. 18. My unworthy communicating is his.

2. All my sins, and infirmities, and failings, and afflictions, in a state of grace, are his. When I was nothing to him he took me and all my faults, Hos. ii. 19, 20; Psa. xcix. 8.

3. All my graces are his, for they are from him and shall be to him. I Cor. xv. 10. 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' My faith glorifies the truth and faithfulness of his promise, my love is the reflection of his, all my humility is the reflection of his condescension, and my patience the effort of his strength, 2 Cor. xii. 9.

4. My person, and my ability, and my talents, and all that I have and can do are his for ever, 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20; Matt. x. 37, 38; Isa. vi. 8: Psa. cxvi. 16.

Hence see: 1. That persons need to look what they are doing, when they take and profess our religion. They then give themselves away, Matt. x. 39.

2. What is the proper work for a communion Sabbath, to be saying, 'My beloved is mine and I am his.' God is for him in his soul. Give you yourselves to him in your soul.

3. What will make us worthy communicants. Christ is the fountain of grace. Go to him for all that you need.

4. How foolish they are who despise Christ. 'All that hate me love death.' They lose the best jewels that exist for nothing."

CHAPTER VIII.

THIRD AND FOURTH YEARS' LABOURS.—1788—1790.

"Beware of men; for they will deliver you up to the councils,—and ye shall be brought before Governors and Kings for my sake." Matt. x. 17, 18.

"THREE weeks before the sacrament, a gentleman from Amherst put into my hand a petition, craving some supply of sermon, subscribed by a number of persons there. This was the first notice that I had of a body of Presbyterians, except at Merigomish, anywhere in the Province, destitute, and wishing for preaching. I laid the petition before the session, and they appointed me to preach at Amherst on the second, third, and fourth Sabbaths of August. Amherst being one hundred miles off, the gentleman wished much that I should go with him immediately, but this could not be granted, as the sacrament was given out. He returned and took me to Amherst at the time appointed. Going through Mr. Smith's congregation, the Chiganois people, who formed part of it, set upon me to give them a week-day sermon upon my return. At first I refused, as it might be offensive to Mr. Smith and others; but they plied me with arguments, so that I had to yield. They said that they sought nothing but the gospel, and that I could not answer to my Master for refusing to preach the gospel to perishing sinners. Not wishing to appear obstinate, I consented; and, accordingly, on my return, preached there to a small congregation, happy to find such an apparent earnestness for the gospel. I found, however, that considerable alienation from their minister existed in the congregation, which I was sorry to find I could do little to remove.

"After leaving Colchester, we had to go through fifty miles

of woods to Amherst, in Cumberland, with only a few houses in the whole distance. Nothing worth mentioning happened to us in our journey, save that my guide, who rode a high horse, mired him most fearfully, so that I despaired of his life. After a great struggle he got out, but I would not suffer my beast to follow his track upon any account, so that we had to go up through the woods a good way, searching for a place where the mire might be passed, which, at last, we found, and returned down the other side till we found the horse.

"When I came fairly in sight of Amherst, I was charmed with the view, especially of its marshes, which are extensive, perfectly level, and, to appearance, extremely fertile. After a few days I crossed to the Westmoreland side, where I saw the largest of the marshes, Tantramar: it is the largest and most beautiful piece of level land which I ever saw, extending about six miles in breadth, and sixteen in length, but narrowing much toward the northern extremity. Little of it was yet mown, but I was told that after a few weeks it would be covered with thousands of hay ricks.

"The settlers of Amherst were Presbyterians, from the north of Ireland, who had emigrated there on account of the tithes and other taxes, which they counted oppressive. They got excellent lots of land at Amherst, on which they could live well without labour, as each lot had a good portion of marsh annexed to it, which enabled the farmer to keep a good dairy, and to manure sufficiently his upland, which was but of moderate quality. They were a pious, intelligent people, who much regretted their situation, destitute of a gospel minister. I preached three Sabbaths to them, besides some week-day sermons, visitations, and religious conversations. My ministrations appeared very acceptable to them. Before I left them they held a public meeting, at which they signed a petition to the Synod, for a minister, specifying a sum for his maintenance; and the petition they committed to me to transmit to the Synod. which I did.

"Here I saw a woman who had been bedfast for a number

of years, and who was on the borders of despair about her eternal salvation. When I first went to visit her, she hid herself under the bed clothes and would not speak. I asked her many questions, but got no answer. At last I said some outlandish thing, which made her pop out her head and speak. She was pale and emaciated, and her countenance the picture of despair. She spoke freely, and described her case plainly and particularly, and showed great quickness and penetration in her replies to my arguings. Though she was without spot before the world, yet she believed herself to be before God, who sees the heart, the most guilty and the vilest being that ever existed, shut up from all access to faith, repentance, or hope, and sealed over to endless ruin. In her view, the sins of Saul, David, and Manasseh, of Peter, Paul, and Judas, were not at all equal to hers. She saw aggravations in her sins, which could not exist in those of Beelzebub. I had a most lively feeling for this woman's distress, but could not help her. I visited her as often as possible, and always left her better, but always found her on my return as distressed as ever. When leaving Amherst I called to bid her farewell. I conversed and prayed with her, besought her and charged her not to sin against her own soul, by rejecting an infinitely gracious Saviour and all his blessings. A gentleman from Amherst accompanied me to Colchester, and I made the rest of my way alone, thinking more of this woman than of all the rest in Amherst.

"She had been confined five years before I saw her, and it was four years after before she got relief. She was seven years without washing her face but once, and very soon after she bedaubed it with ashes, that her face might not belie her heart. During the next five years I went back to Amherst thrice, and during my stay there two of the times, I did my utmost to comfort her, but in vain. The last time I was there she was happy. When God's time came she obtained relief, and that without any human means but her own reflection. Several experienced Christians in Amherst did all they could for her for some years at first, but finding their labour in vain, they lost

all hope of her relief in this world. One morning, as hopeless as ever, she was recounting in her thoughts all the great sinners of whom she had read in the Bible and in the histories of the Church, who had obtained mercy, and concluding as usual that she was a greater sinner than all, when a thought suddenly struck her, what should hinder Christ from bestowing upon her one great pardon far exceeding the pardons which he had scattered over the whole of the individuals of whom she had been thinking? Was it above his power, or his love, or his grace? No. From that moment she saw her pardon possible, and soon she saw it probable, and soon again sure. Shortly after she broke her arm, and not being rightly set, it never mended, and was often attended with excruciating pain, which she bore with great patience. She was to the last a cheerful and judicious Christian, filled with joy and peace of believing.

"On coming home, I enclosed the Amherst petition in a letter to the Synod, in which I earnestly urged them to answer the prayer of the petitioners. I represented that the Amherst Presbyterians were pious and intelligent people, and substantial farmers; and though they were not numerous, the neighbourhood was populous, and without ministers, so that there was good reason to hope that a minister would be successful among them. I now entertained hope of seeing a brother in the ministry before long, but was disappointed.

"Having occasion to travel hither and thither through the congregation, several friends urged me to buy a horse and ride. I did not relish the proposal, for I could not conceive how riding could be a pleasure through the forests of Pictou; and when I did ride, as was sometimes the case, I always felt more pain than in walking. But they replied, that if I were used to riding a while I would like it better. I was therefore persuaded, and bought a horse, and rode him as oft as I could for nearly a year; but still I had more pleasure in walking than riding, and therefore sold the horse and took to my feet again.

"When winter came, I followed the same plan of visitation and examination, as well as preaching, which I followed before,

and found the work specially pleasant but very fatiguing. It was very pleasant, for though I visited many families without religion, yet in many others I had sweet fellowship, conversing of our faith and unbelief, our joys and griefs, our hopes and fears, our trials and deliverances, and the wonderful and gracious managements of God in leading our souls onward in our heavenly course. Our conversation was in heaven, at least in part; and, without question, we enjoyed a little heaven below. But it was very fatiguing, for the bounds of the congregation were gradually enlarging. Pious Highland families in other parts of the Province, finding that the gospel was preached in the Gaelic in Pictou, disposed of their places, and came there to settle. These, with other emigrants, settled in the outskirts of the congregation, but as they chose the best of the land, they frequently left large pieces of the more barren land behind them unsettled, all which I had to travel over every time I went to see them. This continual extension of the congregation soon rendered the visitation of it impossible.

"We had an addition of forty-eight communicants this year (1789), and three more strangers from Merigomish. There had been a continual strife between William MacKay and Colin MacKay, two neighbours and relations, on account of which they were both refused admission to the Lord's Supper last year. Colin made acknowledgments now satisfactory to the session, but William would make none. The consequence was, that Colin was admitted and William not, which irritated him greatly. Had I known of this strife at first, it would have been an increase to my trials, as I boarded with William. I found it necessary now to change my lodgings, which a kind Providence enabled me to do, as Donald MacKay, the elder, had newly built a house, with a room on purpose for my accommodation, where I lodged till I got a house of my own. I made many efforts in private, both by myself and others, to reconcile these two men, but wholly in vain, on account of the lofty and obstinate temper of William MacKay. Finding himself excluded from Church privileges, he commenced as violent a persecution

of the Church as lay in his power. He thought he could do great things, but he did very little, for very few even of our enemies would unite with him. He slandered all good men, but especially the elders and me. I owed him a year's board at leaving his house, and though I offered to pay him, as I did the previous year, he would come to no terms but such as the law would settle. As I had to go to Amherst again, he contrived to take me prisoner in Truro, as if I were an absconding debtor. Being in the house of old Major Archibald, the sheriff came in and very sheepishly told me that he was obliged to take me prisoner. I told him I had no intention of running away. He said he would be my bail himself. Major Archibald said, "You need not, I will be it, and in due form, if you please." The sitting of the court at Onslow (a few miles beyond Truro) exactly suited the time of my return from Amherst, and the trial came on in less than an hour after I arrived at the court-house. I feed no lawyer, and summoned no witness, but showed to the satisfaction of the court that the case was wholly a litigious one, as I had offered to pay him before coming there. The jury gave him the same sum for my board which I had given him for the year before; but, most of them knowing that I had been at Amherst nearly a month, they allowed him only eleven months' board of the year, and laid on him the costs of the suit, amounting to about £20. I could not but observe the kindness of Providence in this suit. It did not cost me a farthing, and it did not detain me two hours on my journey.

"He was greatly irritated, and vowed revenge, if possible. I happened to afford him, as he thought, a fair opportunity, by giving him a character not suiting a good man. He sued me for £500 before the Supreme Court in Halifax, for he would not trust the Court of Common Pleas. As I could not conveniently attend the first term of the court, I had to fee an attorney to put off the trial till the next term, at which I attended with two witnesses sufficiently able to prove all that I had alleged. But, to my great disappointment, I found that the

plaintiff had the privilege of putting it off to a third term, which he did; so that I and my witnesses had our labour for our pains. Thus disappointed, I resolved to take no more trouble about it, but let it take its course. Accordingly it was tried next term, without any evidence on my part, and I was cast in 20*s.*, and the costs of suit, which amounted to £15 or £20—a sum which served as friendly advice to me to speak cautiously, and cheaper than could have been expected. The sum which the plaintiff obtained made him a laughing-stock, and mortified him much more than if he had got nothing at all."

Wm. MacKay was at strife, not only with Colin, but he had at the same time a quarrel with his neighbour on the other side, one Donald Cameron, a Roman Catholic. The Session by great efforts succeeded in bringing William and Colin to something like terms of reconciliation, but when this was done, the Doctor said to the former, "Now you ought to try and be on friendly terms with your other neighbour." The proposal put him in great wrath, and he exclaimed, "Would you have me agree with a Papist?" The Doctor began to reason with him on the propriety of his doing so, urging that the latter was alone among them, there being none of his persuasion near—that they ought to be kind to him, as it might have a beneficial effect upon his mind—that he had already begun to attend preaching, and that by continuing to treat him kindly, they did not know what saving results might follow. The more he reasoned in this way, the more angry MacKay became, accusing the Doctor of endeavouring to lead him astray, when he would have him to be at peace with a Papist, and at length ordering them out of the house.

In pleading his cause before the court at Onslow, he was said to have been very severe upon all connected with the prosecution, among other things quoting and commenting on the passage, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." Such was the earnestness of his denunciations, that it is said that even the Judge got frightened. And as for the lawyer

who conducted the case against him, those near him saw his coat-tails shaking with his agitation, and when he came out, he said he felt at the time as if every word the Doctor said was sending him to hell.

When the second prosecution was going on, he naturally felt much anxiety. But he met with every sympathy, and received ready assistance, not only in his own congregation, but in other places. One instance is worthy of being related: On his way to Halifax he was in the house of Mr. Robert Johnson, one of the Antiburgher party in Colchester. He had had a quarrel with the Session of Truro, and given them a great deal of trouble, and had taken offence at Mr. Cock. He had also joined in the controversy between Dr. MacGregor and the Truro brethren, and was a warm friend of the Doctor. He was a man in very good circumstances. When the Doctor was leaving his house, he said to him, "I suppose you will want some money?" "I would be the better of a few pounds more than I have, but I have good friends before me." "Yes, and you have good friends behind you too." He then brought out £50, saying, "Take that and if I do not ask you for it, you will not have to pay it." The Doctor refused to take the whole, but took a few pounds for his immediate wants.

After the last trial MacKay became his deadly foe, and continued his hostility in every form as long as they both lived. He was a man of very violent temper, and kept himself and others in hot water. His life was any thing but a happy one. Donald MacKay used to say that it happened to him in a manner similar to what had happened to David. He had slain Uriah with the sword, and therefore it was threatened, "The sword shall never depart from thine house." So MacKay had commenced a lawsuit against Dr. MacGregor, the first in which he was ever engaged, and from that date he was scarcely out of litigation as long as he lived, at times being at law with his own family. A large amount of property passed through his hands, he having received a grant of 2000 acres of land for a caribou calf which he presented to the Governor, Sir John

Wentworth, land which he sold for as many pounds, yet when he died there was an execution out against him. Some of his sons, however, became sincere friends of Dr. MacGregor.

As allusion is made above to his change of lodging, we may remark that Donald MacKay's house, in which he lodged for about eight years, was one of the common log houses of the time, and that the room fitted up for him was in the garret. It was, as is said in this country, ceiled, a word applied not only to the inner roof of a building, but to describe any part of it which is lined with boards, properly jointed at the edges, in opposition to what is plastered. A plastered house did not then exist in Pictou. Here he had his bed, and a fire place, with shelves for his books, and as far as these accommodations were concerned he had not so much reason to complain. The family too were disposed to do all in their power for his comfort, and in his host, he had a Christian friend with whom he often "took sweet counsel." But in other respects his circumstances were far from being agreeable. Donald MacKay's wife was frequently insane, and unfit to manage her family. Our readers may imagine the consequences as to his domestic comfort. On one occasion, when the Doctor and Donald came home after being absent, they found she had thrown the bed and bedding down stairs. Donald, without one word of anger or reproach, commenced gathering them up and restoring them to their proper place. The Doctor, in admiration of his calmness, remarked to some bystanders, "Did you ever see a man like Donald?"

"Mrs. A——, who had been a woman of ill fame, was admitted to the Lord's Supper this season. She made very great professions of repentance and reformation, and the elders were unanimously of opinion that she should be admitted. I expressed my fears that she might turn out a stony-ground hearer, and that the spring of her profession was merely the general stir about religion that was in the congregation; at the same time I yielded to their judgment. I wrote her case to my trusty friend, the Rev. John Buist, in Greenock, who gave me

his opinion that we had acted prematurely, and that the conduct of such characters should be proved for a good while before admission. She maintained a consistency of character about three years, and after that was guilty of imprudences, with which the session could not bear. If we had had patience for three years, we would not have admitted her. The question is, should we have waited all that time?

"The surveyor-general of the Province being in Pictou this harvest, I informed him that the East River meeting-house was built upon a vacant lot, containing about three hundred acres of land, and asked him if a grant could be gotten of it for a glebe to Presbyterian ministers. He answered, 'Yes; that there was a precedent for it.' A number of years afterward application was made for the grant, and it was obtained. As Dissenting congregations are not bodies corporate, the grant was made to Donald MacKay, Donald Fraser, and me, and to our heirs, in trust for the congregation; and I believe it was the only mode of granting which the governor could have taken in the circumstances. The bishop, happening to see the grant in the register-office some years since, was heard to say, 'It is too late now; but had I known in time, neither MacGregor, nor MacKay, nor Fraser should have gotten that grant'—a pretty good evidence that bigotry still remains in perfection in the Church of England.

"This fall I was surprised by a proposal from the congregation to send home for another minister. I asked them how they thought to maintain another minister, when they had enough to do to pay me £90? They replied, that it would be hard for a few years, but that every year the place would grow stronger; that they would make greater exertion for the sake of getting a more frequent dispensation of gospel ordinances; and they hoped that I would lower my stipend for a few years, for the sake of getting a fellow-labourer, to lighten my heavy burden. I was very glad to hear such a reply; so I agreed to let the stipend down to £75, and they agreed to raise it £5 annually, till it would be high enough, and to do the same to the

other minister. A petition for another minister was accordingly subscribed by the session and congregation, which I transmitted to the Synod, together with a letter, in which I used all the arguments I could think of to induce them to grant the prayer of the petition. At the same time I wrote to an acquaintance, a preacher, Eneas MacBean, who, I thought, would suit both the people and me. I was high in hope that I would soon see two fellow-labourers—one for Amherst and one for Pictou, and my hope was raised still higher by a promise from my acquaintance that he would come, should the Synod so appoint. But when I afterward got the news of the Synod, I was sadly disappointed and grieved; for, although the Synod appointed him, he would not come, neither could any other be got for Amherst.

"The people of Merigomish, in a petition to the session, expressing their desire for the introduction of church order among them, prayed that proper steps might be taken for the ordination of some elders over them. The session cheerfully granted the petition, and directed that the regular steps should be taken to accomplish its design. Some time afterward Walter Murray, John Small, and George Roy, were ordained accordingly."

"1790. This winter I underwent great fatigue in visitation, and yet had to leave many families unvisited. I sat up many nights, almost the whole night engaged in religious conversation, sometimes rejoicing with those that rejoiced, and sometimes weeping with those that wept. The work of grace was apparently increasing. Several were under great fear that they had communicated unworthily.

"I think it was this year that the first house in Pictou was built. It was some years without a second. Now it contains 1440 souls.*

* There seems to be a mistake as to the year in which the first house was built in the town of Pictou. The ground where the town now stands was cleared in the year 1787, the wood being cut down in the winter. It is said that the first house was erected in the year following.

"We had only about twenty additional communicants, and seven strangers, three from Merigomish, and four from Shubenacadie, nearly sixty miles off. As to attendance at the sacrament, I observe once for all that every year there were a few new communicants; and that till more ministers came and dispensed the sacrament nearer to them, some came from Shubenacadie, Kenneteook, and Nine Mile River, a distance of seventy and eighty miles.

"Soon after the sacrament, Mrs. ——* fell into grievous distress of mind, which continued near twelve months. It began with an apprehension that she had communicated unworthily, but soon spread out into a great variety of branches. The evil one was, in divine sovereignty, permitted to keep her fearfully upon the rack during the greater part of the time she was ill, holding first one temptation and then another before her face till he emptied his whole quiver. She had eaten and drunk damnation to herself—she was guilty of the body and blood of the Lord—she was a reprobate plainly—she had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, and could not be forgiven—she had sinned away her day of grace, and was justly given up to incurable hardness of heart. Faith in Christ, repentance unto life, and the love of God, were precious gifts of God, which she had provoked him, by her unparalleled pride and ingratitude, to shut up for ever from her. She had most piercing agonies from an apprehension of God's wrath then, and most fearful forebodings of worse to come. She would swim all the way to Scotland through a sea of fire to enjoy the love of Christ. Never was a creature seen so self inconsistent as she; for at one time she would do anything and give anything to have Christ, but at another time she cared nothing at all about him, so unconcerned was she about her soul. She believed herself without a parallel among the race of Adam, and for many days expected that she would be made a dreadful monument of divine wrath before the following day. For some time she gave over praying, reading, and hearing of sermons, and was pained

* We omit the name.

at the proposal of prayer. Her case excited much sympathy among the religious part of the people, and no little pique and ridicule among the rest. Several Christians laboured much, and among them I did my best, to combat all her temptations; and we saw that our reasonings had a gradual, though not an immediate, effect toward her good. Almost every time I went to see her, there was some change in her trouble. The enemy's artillery was at last exhausted, or rather God's time to favour was come, and she was restored to greater peace and comfort than ever she enjoyed. Perhaps nothing contributed more eminently to her peace than meditation on God's patience and kindness in disappointing her so frequently of being on the morrow a monument of God's wrath on earth and in hell. In this she found herself frequently and happily mistaken, and it led her to conclude that she might be mistaken in other things of which she was equally sure. She came to see that herself alone stood all the time in the way of her comfort, that Christ was all along freely pouring his blessings on her head, but she turned them all away, till she could find in her evil heart something worthy of them."

This may be a suitable place to remark, that he was peculiarly fitted for dealing with cases of spiritual distress, especially by his patience, his sympathy with them in their trouble, and the skill with which he adapted his instructions to their condition. He would listen to their complaints with attention, and for hours talk and reason with them. Such was the kindness of his manner, that they were greatly attracted to him. We have heard, for example, of an instance many years later, where a man who used himself to come from Cape John all the way to the East River, a distance of more than twenty miles, to see the Doctor and have him talk with him. Of his tact in meeting the difficulties of such persons the following may serve as an example: There was a woman living between where the Albion Mines are now and the Middle River, who had every appearance of being a very pious woman, but through the prevalence of unbelief, was always writing bitter things against

herself and refusing peace. On one occasion her husband, who kept up family worship, was singing the words of the 131st Psalm, "My soul is like a weaned child," she shut the book, refusing to join because she could not sing these words with truth. He talked long and frequently with her, but resolved to try another mode. So one day he came along riding on horseback, and made as if he would go past. She came out and asked him with some anxiety, if he were not coming in. "I believe not." "Why won't you come?" "Oh, you don't like either me or *my Master*." The woman was quite hurt at the idea, but this interview was, we believe, the means of showing her the wrong she was doing herself, and of leading her to peace.

The tendency in the present day is to look upon this state of mind as the result of mere bodily derangement. Doubtless this is often one cause, and it is a view of it that is not to be overlooked. But we fear that the spiritual element, which may frequently be the main one, is apt to be disregarded. This was the aspect, however, in which he mainly, if not entirely, regarded them, perhaps sometimes neglecting bodily causes, which might have had considerable influence. He treated the bitter things they spoke of themselves as temptations of the Evil one, and sought to remedy them by prayer and the application of "the truth as it is in Jesus." Looking at them as maladies of the soul, his solicitude was to lead the unfortunate persons to the great Physician, and to apply to their wounded spirit the balm which is in Gilead. In this he was often very successful. Of this the following is the most remarkable instance we have heard: A man who lived at Cape John shore, named MacKinnon, had fallen into a state of melancholy, and acted in such a manner that his friends thought him crazy, and had him lodged in the Pictou jail. When there the poor man was always calling for Dr. MacGregor, and saying, that if he would see him he would soon set him all right. At length they did send for the Doctor, who came and conversed with him in Gaelic. He soon saw that the man was really anxious about his spiritual

condition, and told the sheriff that the man was not crazy, and that they might safely let him go. The result of the Doctor's conversations with the man was that he was soon rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and lived a consistent Christian life till the time of his death.

In the summer of this year (1790) he visited Onslow. We have not been able to ascertain the circumstances which led to his visit, or why he preached there, while the people were properly under the ministerial charge of Mr. Cock, but we believe that there was a party opposed to the latter, and that he had gone at their solicitation. We know that on one occasion he was refused admission to the church. The party at whose solicitation he was preaching proposed breaking open the doors, but he refused to allow any such measures to be taken and preached in the open air.

Of his present visit the only incident that we have to record, is one that is mentioned by himself among a number of others, which he records under the title "Memorabilia," which we will give in his own words:

"In July 1790, in Onslow meeting-house I had a speedy and remarkable answer of an ejaculatory prayer. Immediately after sermon, at my right hand stood up a man and intimated to the congregation that Mr. Chipman would preach there after half an hour's interval. Immediately I prayed in my heart, 'Lord, confound him, that he may not prevent the springing of the good seed sown,' for I knew that Mr. Chipman, being a New Light preacher, would teach the people the grossest errors. About five minutes after he began to preach, Mr. Chipman fainted and continued senseless about ten minutes, and though he recovered, yet he did not preach any that day. Therefore another New Light minister, who was there, stood up to preach in his place, but after he had proceeded about five minutes, confounded, he gave it up, and the congregation dismissed."

CHAPTER IX.

GENERAL VIEW OF HIS EARLY MINISTRATIONS IN PICTOU.

"Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown. Israel was holiness to the Lord and the first fruits of his increase." Jer. ii. 2, 3.

HAVING advanced thus far, it may be proper to pause in our narrative, to give a general view of his early ministrations, more especially as our subsequent chapters will introduce us into his Missionary labours abroad. The sketch we shall give, however, is not intended to describe merely the years over which we have passed, but will be descriptive of the whole nine years in which he was alone, and also to some extent of his pastoral labours during his whole life.

When he arrived, he was deeply discouraged at the gloomy appearance of the country and the low state of the people. A letter of one of his friends represents him as having written of "the dismal appearance of the place, and that if he could have conveniently got away from it he would have come." Still he set about his labours with energy, though oftentimes with very depressed spirits.

From the first his sermons were sound and evangelical, and delivered in an agreeable manner. But neither in vigour of thought nor fervour of appeal, did they reach the superlative excellence of those of his after years. But the improvement was very rapid. One circumstance which perhaps more than any other especially tended to arouse the ardour of his nature,

was his view of the condition of the settlers. "His spirit was stirred within him when he beheld" the ignorance and spiritual desolation around him, and all his energies, intellectual, and spiritual, as well as physical, were awakened on their behalf. To the preparation of his discourses, he devoted as much time and labour as his circumstances would permit. When at home he was diligent in study, and in his little garret he spent hours over his books, it might be when others were asleep. But he was much of his time from home, and even when at home he had often little time allowed him for study. He was not long here till he was greatly interrupted when at home by calls from persons wishing to converse with him. There were times when not a day would elapse without such calls, sometimes to the number of half a dozen. Many of these would be anxious about the salvation of their souls—some would come to have their perplexities solved either in regard to matters of religious experience or Christian doctrine, while some perhaps came from curiosity, or to enjoy his company. He however never repelled any, and spent much time in conversing with them, although their business was not of such a nature as to justify such encroachments upon his time. So little consideration had the people that some would come to converse with him on the Sabbath morning. Under these circstances it was little of regular study that he could do.

He was therefore soon under the necessity of abandoning the practice of writing out his sermons in full. The mode which he adopted, and which he followed through life, was to write outlines, containing the heads and particulars, with the leading illustrations, and the principal passages of Scripture to be quoted. Of these we have already given samples. These were the result of much thought, or as much as he could give, and he learned to study in every situation, sometimes with the noise of children around him, at other times travelling along the road. On one occasion going up to preach at a private house, in company with old James MacDonald, the elder, the latter happened in conversation to quote a particular passage of

Scripture. A little after the Doctor became silent, as if musing. James thinking that he was studying his sermon, did not disturb him. When they arrived at the place of preaching, the Doctor preached on the text which James had quoted, with great life; observing afterward, that he had intended to preach on another subject, but that the remark of James had led him to select the one chosen. Frequently, however, he was obliged to preach without much study, and he was graciously sustained, as many of the servants of the Lord have been in such circumstances. On one occasion, coming home to Donald MacKay's very late in the week, he was obliged to preach without much preparation. When service was over, Donald said to him, "I think you got that sermon out of your sleeve." He acknowledged that he had not much time to study it. "Oh," said Donald, "I wish that you would always preach without study, if you would give us such sermons as that."

It has been said that the nature of a minister's preaching might be learned from a list of his texts. We have such lists for some months of his early ministry. From these we learn, that his preaching was occupied with the great themes of evangelical truth. One practice, then common in Scotland, which he followed, may be particularly noticed, viz., preaching courses of sermons, sometimes on some great doctrine of the gospel, at other times on the several verses, in succession, of some rich portion of the word of God. Thus we find a series of discourses on Rom. viii., another on John xv., and a third on Isaiah liii.; commonly one verse, but sometimes only one clause, and at other times two verses being employed at a time. That he did not neglect the practical duties of religion, we may learn from his course of sermons on the Ten Commandments already described. Besides he regularly followed the Scottish practice of lecturing, or continuous exposition of the books of Scripture, his first course being on the gospel of Matthew.

Very soon a deep impression was made upon the minds of the community, manifested in the eagerness with which they attended upon his ministry, from every part of the district.

Many doubtless were attracted by the novelty of the service (for preaching was then a novelty), and even to those who had a spiritual taste for the word, this added an additional charm to his ministrations. But many came from higher motives, even to hear words by which they might be saved. In winter they could not all assemble at one place, as the snow shoe was the only mode of conveyance. But in summer, whether the preaching was at the East or West River, the inhabitants of all the neighbouring settlements attended. A large number came by water in canoes or boats, but many walked; and we have heard even of young women walking regularly to the East River, from West River and Rogers Hill, distances of ten, twelve, or fifteen miles. The aged would set out on Saturday, and stay overnight with some friend on the way, while the young and robust would leave home early on the Sabbath morning, perhaps before sunrise. They usually travelled in small companies, the older endeavouring to lead the conversation to religious subjects. Most of them walked barefoot, some carrying their shoes and stockings in their hands, till they arrived at a brook near the church, where they washed their feet, and put on their shoes and stockings, and thus proceeded to the place of meeting.

When they assembled, all, with the exception of the profligates, who soon relinquished attendance, listened with the utmost attention, the younger portion of the audience as to something both new and strange, the older with a pleasure chastened by the recollection of similar privileges enjoyed in their native land. The only interruption, we have heard of, was by a Quaker, present on one occasion, who when the Doctor had after sermon called upon the parents to present their children for baptism, stood up and said, "Friend James, who gave thee authority to do that?" The Doctor replied, "Come to me to-morrow and I will tell you." The Quaker did not accept the invitation.

When the services were over, they travelled in groups homeward, when the conversation, led by one of the elders or some

aged Christian, would be on spiritual subjects; but would chiefly turn upon the sermons of the day, and among the company, the greater portion of what they had heard would be repeated. In this Robert Marshall and Kenneth Fraser were particularly distinguished. Returning from the Loch Broom Church, the latter would collect those going in the same direction with him, at a spot where there was a windfall on the path. Here they sat down, and the bread and other refreshments which they had brought being handed round, he would begin at the youngest, and require him to tell what he recollected of the sermon, and proceed in the same manner to the eldest, and among them the greater portion of the discourses would be recalled.

A good many of the older people from the Highlands could not read, but it is said that many of them could give a wonderfully correct account of the sermon, and had much Scripture in their memories. Those who could read had been taught in a manner common till a much later period in the Highlands. This was to take the English Bible, and teach the pupils to give a Gaelic word for each English one. Thus even those who could speak very little English, could give an account of an English sermon, or translate a chapter of the English Bible into Gaelic. And as Gaelic Bibles were then very scarce, this way of reading the Scriptures was very common among them.

Next in importance to the public preaching of the gospel, and perhaps occupying more time, and involving more labour, were his ministrations from house to house, and his public catechising. But regularly did he discharge these important parts of pastoral duty. His visitations were conducted in the following manner: After the usual salutations, he lost no time in proceeding to the object of his visit. He commenced by asking each member of the household, beginning at the head of the family and proceeding to the youngest, whether they regularly observed the duty of secret prayer. He next asked the head of the family whether he discharged the duty of family worship. The various answers to these questions led to corresponding explanations and exhortations. He then com-

menced with the husband and started some subject in religion, and put such questions as might best serve to elicit his state of mind. He thus engaged him in conversation, and tendered such advice, encouragement, or warning, as his case seemed to require. He did the same with the wife, and with each member of the family around to the youngest child, to whom he put a few questions, and spoke a few kindly words. Thus his visitation was a direct religious conversation with every individual, and an earnest pressing home upon each of religious things. We need not say that such an exercise, in the style of familiar conversation of which he was master, was fitted to make him acquainted with the spiritual condition of every member of his flock, and how such close personal dealing was fitted to produce saving impressions. The whole was concluded by an affectionate, fervent prayer. So much time was occupied in these exercises, and the houses were so much scattered, that three or at most four families were as many as he could visit in a day.

The following is a brief description of his diets of examination. On Sabbath intimation was given that all the families, within a certain distance, would meet at such a house on a particular day named. Such was the interest which these meetings excited, in those days, that not only would the members of the families in the quarter attend, but a number from other sections would esteem it a privilege to be present, and would attend to receive instruction as hearers, so that the house would be full. After prayer he commenced with one family, usually that in whose dwelling they were assembled. Commonly some question of the Shorter Catechism was chosen as the basis of instruction. Perhaps Justification was the theme, and then the father was examined on some point in the question, such as the meaning of Justification, or the condemnation of all men by nature, and the impossibility of being justified by our own doings. The answers given afforded opportunities for the correction of errors—for the elucidation of what was not clearly understood, or the fuller illustration of what was but imperfectly

appreciated. Then he turned to the mother, and proceeded to elucidate, by means of questions to her, another point in the question, and so with the other members of the family in order, with the exception of the very young children. The next family was dealt with in a similar manner, and so on till he had gone over them all. And now the signal is given, "You young children, come around me," and immediately there is a pattering of little feet, and a rush forward of the juvenile portion of the audience. Glistening eyes show the eagerness of many a little heart, to show how he has "learned his questions," and his anxiety to gain an approving word from "the minister." Some questions suited to their capacity are put to each. Those who have answered well receive their due meed of approbation, while others are encouraged to do better next time, and all receive a kindly exhortation. A short address to the whole assemblage and prayer conclude the service.

"There were many circumstances," to use the language of another, "that imparted to these meetings a peculiar interest—the number and variety of the questions proposed—the diversified and often striking illustrations of the subject under review—the answers given—their different degrees of pertinency, and the ground they afforded for remark, elucidation, or correction, on the part of the examinator—the amount of doctrinal matter exhibited—the familiar style in which the whole business was conducted—all this conspired to render of high consequence this portion of ministerial labour. It was the general persuasion, that, at one such meeting, there was often more information communicated than was to be derived from many sermons. But the truths brought under notice, frequently formed the subject of after reflection and conversation. It was kept in mind, who had best acquitted themselves in the answers returned, what the mistakes that had been incurred, the corrections by which they had been followed, and their coincidence with the infallible standard of revelation. The tendency of all this was to produce more correct, and extensive

views of divine doctrine, to qualify to hear the gospel with more understanding, to peruse treatises on religious subjects with greater advantage, and to render more fit for subsequent examination. While thus a taste for sacred truth was invigorated, there was also a greater aptitude to impart information to those, whose cases might more urgently require it."

From the state of the country, as we have already described it, these pastoral duties could not be discharged without much labour in travelling. In summer the harbours were crossed and the streams ascended in canoes. Those used by the whites were usually constructed of a single tree, which had been hollowed out, generally one of the large pines, which were then abundant. These, when properly made, formed a very convenient craft capable of carrying four or five persons with perfect safety. But from the situation of the people, it was only a small portion of his travelling that could be performed in this manner. Much of it was by land, and only in a few places were there even paths. What were called roads scarcely served any purpose but to prevent the traveller going astray. They were narrow, and the traveller was apt to be scratched by the branches of trees, by which they were crossed, stones and roots of trees rendered the walking difficult, and at most seasons of the year they were wet and boggy, though over the worst places logs were laid. All these circumstances rendered walking disagreeable. But the chief of the travelling was along shore or along the banks of rivers, which were often encumbered with trees and stones, and at other places presented bogs, in which the pedestrian was in danger of being mired, or creeks which required a long circuit round, or brooks which it was necessary to ascend for some distance to a convenient place of crossing. But the greater part of his regular family visiting and catechizing was done in winter. It is certain that whether more snow fell then than now, that it lay more continuously through the winter, and most of the travelling was on snow shoes, except when crossing the ice, or when the snow had been soft-

ened by a thaw, and, being afterward frozen, became sufficiently hard to bear the traveller.*

But in this work he was remarkably active. There were few men equal to him in going through the woods. His very gait was peculiar. It was so fast that he kept others who were in company with him on a half run. The late Alexander Cameron, of Loch Broom, one of his elders, and a strong active man, used to say that he never saw a man, with whom it was as difficult to keep beside. By running he could outstrip him, but if he relapsed into a walk, the Doctor was sure to be soon away head of him. Though not a very strong man, yet he possessed such remarkable powers of endurance, that he travelled long distances with comparatively little fatigue, and outdid many, who were accustomed to labour and travelling in the forest.

In visiting among the people during these years he also endured much privation from the poverty of the people. Their little huts had only one way in which they could be kept comfortable from the cold, viz., by large fires, and happily wood was abundant. There were none of those diabolical inventions, called cooking stoves, which only render darkness visible, and by consuming the oxygen of the air, and leaving the inmates of the dwelling to breathe the impure residue, are destroying the health of the young of our land, and sending fell consumption on his destroying march through our borders. But a large chimney, with a capacious open fire-place, occupied almost one entire end of the house. In the back of this fire-place, was placed a large billet of wood, cut off the thickest tree that could be found, and familiarly called "the back log." In front of this, resting on two iron supporters called "dog irons," smaller sticks were laid, under which the fire was placed. A glowing blaze soon ascended, which diffused by radiation at once heat, and light, and cheerfulness, to the whole dwelling.

But their accommodations, otherwise, were of the poorest

* A fuller account of the travelling in those times will be given hereafter in our eleventh chapter.

kind. Often the hard plank was his only bed, and potatoes his only fare. We have heard of his waking to find his coverlet white with snow. Where the people were in better circumstances, a comfortable bed was provided, sometimes the only one in the house. But during these years, on his visitations, which were mostly in winter, his most common bed was some straw spread out before the fire, and covered with a rug. Such clothes as they had were given for a covering. He would take off his coat and wrap it round his feet, which were most apt to become cold. But his chief dependence for heat was upon the fire, which was left burning when he lay down, but which he was frequently obliged to replenish during the night. Yet never was he known to complain. No expressions but those of gratitude escaped his lips. But how keenly he felt such privations may be learned from the remark which he frequently made in his advanced years, when surrounded by the comforts of life, that he never lay down to rest at night, without feeling thankful for a bed.

His fare too was of the humblest kind, but he partook of it with thankfulness, knowing that the people did the best for him they could. He not only forbore all complaint, but with a delicate appreciation of the feelings of poor people, employed every means of making them see that he valued their kindness. Thus when potatoes and gruel were the only articles of diet provided, we have been told of his eating heartily, lest they should think that he either despised their fare, or felt the want of better; or again when a little bread and milk was offered, and the poor woman felt mortified at not having any thing else, we have heard of his speaking even in terms of reproof, as if she were despising God's mercies, saying to her, "What more would you wish? Here is bread—the emblem of Christ and his blessings, and milk—the emblem of the word of God. Desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby."

But in nothing was he more distinguished than by his conversational powers. In this he possessed a peculiar gift. Whether travelling, or in the house, he kept up one uninter-

rupted stream of interesting conversation. The only time that might be considered an exception to this, was when travelling to preaching. Then he was commonly silent, but returning he was more than usually fluent. Much of his conversation was directly on the subject of religion, and whatever subject came up he possessed a remarkable faculty of giving it a religious turn. This power was remarked by every person who came in contact with him. In after years, some of his brethren used to say, they really envied him. One of them said, "We'll go into a house, and will be thinking upon what subject to begin and how to introduce it, but before we know, Mr. MacGregor will be right in the midst of religious conversation." On one occasion travelling in company with another minister, he called at a house on the way, while the former went on to the house where they were to stop. When the Doctor arrived he found him laughing and talking with some levity with a young woman in the house. The Doctor immediately began to speak rather reprovingly to him. The latter replied, "We can't always be talking religion." "Oh," said the Doctor, "you should look at the example of the Saviour. When he entered a house, he went *slap dash* into the subject of religion." Nothing could more strikingly illustrate his own practice. He has been known to say that he never met with but one man with whom he could not engage in religious conversation. This was an old soldier, a drunken, ignorant, Irish Roman Catholic. He could find nothing which would serve as a handle by which to get hold of his mind. He remarked that *it seemed strange* to him, that he should have travelled some miles with him, and not have been able to do any thing for his spiritual enlightenment. What a reproof is this to so many ministers and private Christians, who spend, it may be, days in the company of others, without an effort to direct their minds to the great concern!

But while his conversation was largely occupied with religion, yet much of it was upon other subjects. At one time he might be heard instructing those around him in the mysteries of the Copernican system, although the idea that the earth

moved round the sun, provoked the incredulous declaration from one, whose senses seemed to contradict such a view: "Lies, lies! when I built my house I put the door on the west side, and it's there yet;" at another time, explaining the wonderful processes of nature, evaporation from the sea, the carrying of the clouds over the land by the wind, the descent of the rain, and the combined influences, by which the fruits of the earth are brought to maturity. Or again he might be found pointing out improved modes of culture, or advising them as to improved modes of management; while again he would be gleaning information from them on subjects, with which his companions were better acquainted than himself. Nor should it be omitted that he would sometimes enliven the company with some harmless joke.

The following incident, simple as it is, will serve to give an idea of his usual manner. Two young men had gone over to Salmon River to get some grain ground. There were indeed by that time one or two mills erected in Pictou, but they were useless. While there the Doctor arrived on his way home from a mission to Amherst. He was asked to stay all night, but at first felt inclined to go on, as he had been several weeks absent from home. But on finding two of his own people there, who could not leave till the next morning, he consented to remain. After having had dinner and being rested a little, he went down to the mill and took a plan of it. The next day they set out on their return home, he riding on horseback, they walking, with their sacks of flour across their horses' backs. Going through some bushes, they pulled a quantity of hazel nuts, which they gave him to eat. On emerging into an open space, he said, "Now you've been giving me food, I will give you some spiritual food." He accordingly took out Fleming on the Fulfilling of Scripture, out of which he read for some time. So interested did they become, that my informant, who was one of them, said, that the very first opportunity he had, he purchased a copy of the work. The plan of the mill he brought home to John Fraser (squire) who was about erecting

one. It was not quite perfect, and he sent it to a millwright in Halifax, with whom he was acquainted, who made some corrections upon it, and from his plan as thus amended, Mr. Fraser built his mill.

In the opportunities afforded him of intercourse with the people no class was overlooked. Wherever he met with the young he would always engage in conversation with them. So attracted were they to him, that boys would follow him for some distance along the road to enjoy his company. Persons now aged or in middle life, have told me of meeting him on the road, and his stopping to give them exhortations, which they had never forgotten. But it seemed as if he made it especially his object to pay attention to such unfortunate creatures, as from age, poverty, or some infirmity, are apt to be despised.

While we have referred particularly to his labours directly on behalf of religion, we must observe, that his efforts were also directed to whatever else he considered as tending to promote the welfare of the community, and the comfort of individuals and families. Particularly did he labour to improve the education of the place, to induce among the people a deeper sense of its value, and to make greater exertions for its support, while he was diligent in his endeavours to introduce more efficient systems. He also himself imported Bibles and religious books for sale and circulation among the people. Those were not the days of Bible and Tract Societies, and this could not be done so easily as now. But he had that active turn of mind, that he was always busy about something, and attended to every thing small and great, even to what might seem trifling. Thus when asking the head of a family, if he observed family worship, and learning that he did not at night for want of light, he would direct them to take some pine roots, and have them split up and dried, and the wife to hold one of them as a torch while the husband read. Or again in the house where he lodged, he might be found telling them to put a large back log into the chimney on Saturday night, which would do over Sabbath, or to carry in sufficient water to do till Monday. Or on one of

the preaching days of a sacrament, he would tell the young and vigorous to go over to the East or West River, and leave the old to occupy the houses near at hand.

All this was done in so kind a manner, that these very little things aided in causing the affections of the people to entwine around him. Even when he reproved, and no man was ever more faithful in giving reproof, it was done with such kindness, that the offending were attached to him at the very time that he exposed their faults. Instances there were in which he reproved with severity, but these were peculiar cases, and in general his reproofs were rendered effective by the very gentleness of his manner.

With such a manner of going out and coming in among them, we need not wonder that he attained a place in the affection of the people, as high as ever any mere man did in the hearts of his fellow men. Even very rough characters were attracted to him, of which the following may be given as an instance. On one occasion returning home from Prince Edward Island, late in the autumn, a strong north-west wind arose and the waves ran high, in consequence of which they could not reach Pictou Harbour. The nearest point they could make was the beach extending out from near the mouth of Merigomish Harbour. He was landed here and his companions set out on their return. He took up his knapsack, and was looking which way to direct his course, it being his intention to go to Mr. Roy's, when he saw a tall stout man coming along. He turned out to be an old soldier, but a very rough Irishman—a very strong man, and one who had been noticed for his bravery in the field. The Doctor asked him the way to Mr. Roy's. He said he would go with him to show him the way, and carry his knapsack for him, and added, "If it would not hurt you I would carry yourself." He led him first to Mr. Roy's, where they lodged that night. In the morning he said that he would go with him to the East River and carry his knapsack, and if he wished to go farther he would go with him.

There was another class in whom he felt a deep interest, to which we may refer, although his interest in them secured no particular result. We allude to the Aboriginal Indians. He was very charitable to them. Coming along the Middle River he once fell in with two Indians drawing an aged relative on a hand sled. Entering into conversation with them he discovered that they were in want, and gave them an order on two of his parishioners living near for the amount of their share of his year's support. One of the latter remarked to the Indians, that he was better to them than their own priests. They replied, "Our priests always wantum, but he givum." But he especially felt an anxiety to promote their spiritual interests, and often talked of plans for this end. Some years later, the Earl of Dalhousie, then Governor of the Province, being in Pictou, called in company with Mr. Mortimer to see him. Conversation having turned upon the benevolent and missionary efforts of the day, the Doctor said, "But there is a poor unfortunate class among ourselves, that I wish we could do something for, I mean the Indians." "Oh," said the Earl, "they are just like the brutes, you can't do any thing for them." "Oh," said the Doctor mildly, but very solemnly, "Your Lordship should not say so," and he went on to refer to the success of the gospel on tribes equally degraded with them. But such was the jealousy of the Romish priests, under whom the Indians were, that he never succeeded in doing any thing effectual for them.

But the most interesting of the services of these early times was the dispensation of the sacrament of the Supper, which after the first summer took place annually. The event was the subject of preparation for some time previously. Intimation was given several weeks beforehand, and times were appointed for conversing with those who sought admission to the church. They were subjected to a most thorough examination as to their knowledge of the doctrines of the gospel, their experience of its saving power, and their performance of their religious duties, especially secret prayer, and, where the parties were heads of

families, family worship and the catechizing of their households. Sometimes their spiritual gifts were tested by their being called on to engage in prayer before him. The Session also met, it might be several times, when the conduct of church members was strictly inquired into, the unruly were warned, the erring admonished, differences were adjusted, and scandals purged.

The dispensation of the Supper was the occasion for the gathering of multitudes, like the children of Israel assembling in Jerusalem to their solemn feasts. Not only did persons come from all parts of the county of Pictou, and from the various settlements in Colchester, but numbers travelled from Nine Mile River, Kennetcook, and other places in the county of Hants, at a distance of at least eighty miles, and in later years some came from Prince Edward Island. The houses and barns of those who lived within a reasonable distance of the place, were freely opened for the reception of strangers, and sometimes both would be well filled. In preparation for such assemblages we have heard of those who were in somewhat better circumstances baking bread by the barrel, but the poorer were equally ready with the wealthy to provide as they were able for the entertainment of strangers. It is told that Robert Marshall, when providing to the best of his power, for those who came from a distance, and yet feeling the humble character of the provision made for them, was in the habit of acknowledging the fact with the remark, "Gin ye're Christians, ye'll be content wi' it, an' gin ye're no, it 's mair than ye deserve."

The spot selected for the observance of the ordinance was on the Intervale, on the Middle River a little below the bridge at Archibalds, on what is now the farm of Mr. John Douglass, under the shade of a high bank on the west side of the river. But the stream has encroached so much upon the Intervale, that its waters now pass over the spot where the sacred Supper was observed. By midday the sun was so far round, that the bank shaded the worshippers from his rays. Here a tent was placed for the minister, the multitudes sat or reclined upon the

green grass of the Intervale, or under the leafy shade of the trees on the bank, facing the minister.

Early in the week people began to arrive, so that by the day the services were to commence they were assembled by hundreds, in after years by thousands. The ordinance was dispensed in the manner common at that time in Scotland, and as this is in many places now known only as matter of history, we may give a particular account of the services which were usually observed in connection with this solemn rite of Christian worship. Thursday was the first day of "holy convocation," it being called the day of humiliation or fasting. On this day two sermons were preached, one in English and the other in Gaelic. These discourses were usually directed to the object of bringing sin to remembrance, and exhorting men to confession and repentance. The Psalms selected bore reference to the same subject, while the prayers were principally devoted to the acknowledgment of sins, and supplications for mercy on account of them. The remaining part of the day was spent with the solemnity of a Sabbath, being devoted to such secret and family religious exercises, as were suitable to such a day. Some, though not the majority, observed it literally as a fast, abstaining entirely from food before preaching, and afterward partaking only of such slight refreshment, as was necessary to support nature.

Friday was what was called by the Highlanders, "the day of the men,"—a day for private religious meetings conducted by the elders, catechists, or more experienced Christians, similar to what is called in the United States and other places, conference meetings. Prayer, praise, mutual exhortation, remarks on the subject especially selected for consideration, or, as it was commonly called, "the question," (which, however, usually involved marks of grace,) formed the exercises of this day. Saturday was the preparation day, and again he preached a sermon in each language, generally of such a nature as was fitted to prepare the minds of Christians for the solemn services before them.

The remaining portions of these days were not devoted to religious exercises, as the Thursday. Much of them was spent in friendly intercourse among the people. Not only did all the people in the county know one another, but they generally knew most of the residents in the neighbouring counties. And they generally lived as a band of brothers. And these annual services were almost the only occasions when they could meet, and there was but little communication otherwise in the interval. We need not wonder that there was much interchange of friendly feelings. But yet these meetings in the several families around were scenes of hallowed Christian fellowship. In their dwellings was "heard the voice of rejoicing and salvation." The conversation led by the serious, perhaps by some hoary headed elder, would revert to the sermons of the day—perplexities on the minds of the enquiring would be solved by the knowledge and experience of riper Christians—kindly exhortations to the young would be received with reverence from the lips of the aged—while all were sanctified by devotional exercises. In this way we believe that many families, in the spiritual profiting derived from the company of their guests, have had reason to feel, that they had "entertained angels unawares."

Then came the Sabbath, in which all the services had to be conducted by himself. After the opening Psalm and prayer, came what was called the Action Sermon, usually devoted to the great central truths of Redemption, specially exhibited in the ordinance of the Supper. This was followed by prayer and praise, and then by the service usually known in Scotland as "the fencing of the tables," which consists in a plain statement of the character of those who have and those who have not a right to observe the ordinance, and which was generally concluded by the reading of such passages of Scripture as Psalm xv.; Matt. v. 1–12; Gal. v. 19–24. Then followed part of an appropriate Psalm, during the singing of which the elders brought forward the elements and placed them upon the communion table, while the first company of communicants slowly

and reverently took their places on the seats, provided for them. These consisted of two long benches on which they sat facing one another, with a narrow table covered with a pure white cloth between them. On the seats being filled, the minister took his place at the head of the table, and having first read as authority for observing the ordinance, one of the scriptural narratives of its institution, usually Paul's in 1 Cor. xi. 23–26, he offered up prayer, especially giving thanks for the blessings of salvation, and for this ordinance in which it is commemorated. Then followed what was called the "serving of the tables." A short address was delivered to those at the table, when the minister broke the bread and handed a portion of it and afterwards the wine to those nearest to him, repeating as he did so the words of institution. The elements were then passed along from one to another, to the foot of the table, the attending elders supplying deficiencies, while the minister continued his exhortation. When the address was concluded, he dismissed them from the table with such words as the following, "Go then from the table of the Lord singing his praise, and may the God of peace go with you." At the utterance of these words, the precentor gave out the first line of the verse immediately following what had been last sung of the Psalm of which the singing had commenced; and as the singing proceeded, those who had been at the table rose, and began, many with moistened eyes, slowly and reverently, as if treading on holy ground, to retire, while another band with the same measured tread advanced and took their places. Another table service followed and another singing, and so on till all those who spoke the one language were served, when those who spoke the other were served in a similar manner in their native tongue, until on the whole altogether there would commonly be seven table services. After the service of communicating was over, a Psalm or Hymn, in imitation of the Saviour, (Mark xiv. 26,) was sung, after which the minister delivered the concluding exhortation, usually called "the directions." This consisted commonly of advices to those who had communicated, as to their future conduct,

and an earnest appeal to those who had been merely spectators, to embrace the Saviour and profess his name. Then came the evening sermon, the whole being concluded with prayer and praise. These services often occupied the most of the day. They commenced at ten or eleven o'clock, but the sun would be far down the western sky before the last sermon would be over. On Monday, which was commonly called the Thanksgiving day, there were again two sermons.

We need not say that such services so long continued, and conducted entirely by himself were severe exercises to him both intellectually and physically; and we need not wonder at hearing of him on the morning of the first of these days, as he descended the hill on the east side of the river, where he came in sight of the crowd collected, stopping for a moment, and expressing a wish that the services were over. But while beforehand he was diligent in his preparations, he learned in the hour of need to cast himself upon the Lord, and he was graciously sustained. The promise was fulfilled, "It shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak." He seemed to rise with the occasion, and in the vigour and unction of his address to increase to the end. Indeed from the descriptions given, his efforts on these occasions were the most astonishing of his life. It was on these occasions, particularly, that the remarkable power of his voice was exhibited. But few men could address large audiences in the open air as easily as he could. His voice was not indeed loud nor anything of what is called stentorian, but it was beautifully clear and melodious as a woman's. There was not the least harshness about it, but its tones were rather plaintive and tender, yet such was its compass that he was easily heard over the largest assembly; and so clear was his utterance, that he was heard as distinctly at the outer edge of the crowd, as at the very centre. We have had places pointed out to us at distances of half a mile, where not only was his voice heard, but the words were distinguished. And on the occasion which we are describing it was remarked that it increased in clearness and fulness till the last day of the service.

To the people we need not say that these were occasions of deep interest, and notwithstanding the labour they involved, they were seasons of pleasure to himself. The whole circumstances in which they were assembled were fitted to stir the soul of both preacher and congregation. The spot upon which they were met, the quiet grassy glade, on which the tables were spread, with the wooded bank in front, looking down upon the river, and around the sloping hills covered with forest then in all the verdure of summer, and only here and there broken by the small clearing of the settler, formed a scene from which the eye even of the mere lover of nature might drink in delight; but he must have been of a cold heart, who could gaze unmoved on that multitude assembled under the broad canopy of heaven to engage in the highest and holiest rites of our religion—the old men reverently uncovered while their gray locks were occasionally stirred by the summer breeze—the aged women, their heads covered only with a cap and handkerchief, sitting near the speaker, or, it might be, admitted into the tent with him,—together with those in the prime of life, the busy matron and the sturdy woodsman, the maiden diffidently coming forward to join in covenant with the heavenly bridegroom and the children now first brought to witness "the sacrament," and gazing with childish curiosity at each successive service—all now reverently standing with bowed heads, the aged like Jacob leaning on his staff, or in companies passing slowly to and from the communion table, or again all listening with eagerness as the sweetly tender tones of his voice rang through the valley—more especially in the sacred stillness of a summer eve, when nature seemed hushed in silence, and the trees of the wood appeared as if listening to the voice of the servant of God, while the far off echoes sounded as the response of the work of creation to the celebration of redemption.

But we must especially notice the singing. Who that has heard the service of praise at a Highland sacrament at the present day can have forgotten it? The old tunes, all in the minor key, with their peculiar mournful expression.

"Perhaps Dundee's wild warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive Martyrs, worthy of the name,
Or noble Elgin beets the heavenward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays,
Compared with these, Italian trills are tame,
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise."

The peculiar reading or chanting of each line by the precentor, previous to singing,—then the singing with no accompaniment to the human voice, but the ripple of the river and the rustling of the forest—not conducted by a few performers, it may be, hired to do the praises of God on behalf of the congregation, but the whole multitude joining heart and voice, in a volume of melody which rolled toward heaven as the voice of many waters. "Oh," said a Lowlander who understood not a word of Erse, "that Gaelic singing, there is grace in the very sough o' it.

But to himself and the godly of the land, these seasons were especially delightful as great *spiritual* festivals. His heart was moved for the multitude fainting for the bread of life, and he laboured as in agony for their salvation. "His doctrine dropped as the rain, his speech distilled as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." His joy was fulfilled as he saw them eagerly listening to the word of life, and saw so many whom he had reason to regard as his spiritual children, feeding as in green pastures and beside the still waters. While many a pious heart, as they went up to these solemnities, instinctively sung in the words of the Psalmist, "I joyed when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem,—whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, into the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord." To such these services were as cold water to a thirsty soul. "The Holy Spirit came down as rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth." The hearts of believers were satisfied "even as with marrow and fatness," and the "Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this

and that man was born here." Multitudes there have been constrained to say, "How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

To no class were these services more interesting than to the Highlanders, who came from a distance. Except when they came to Pictou, or when he visited them, they never heard the gospel in their native language, for he was the only Gaelic speaking minister in the Lower Provinces. It is well known, that their mountain tongue has a peculiar influence upon this people. But all the circumstances of these occasions, the deep solemnity of the services, the earnestness of his address, the associations which it called up of their native land, and of similar gatherings there, rendered its tones still dearer and more impressive; and with tears streaming down their faces, they eagerly listened for hours to the words of eternal life, in language which fell on their ears like sweetest music, and awakened the most tender recollections. So deeply were they affected by these services, that it was quite common for them immediately on their return home to look out for a purchaser for their farms, and, as soon as they could sell, to remove to Pictou, that they might be under the ministry of Doctor MacGregor and enjoy the gospel in their native tongue.

Of the incidents of these sacraments, one of the most remarkable of which we have heard is the following: On one occasion a very heavy shower of rain appeared approaching right upon the congregation assembled. It was just at the time of the change from the one language to the other. The people became quite agitated. He called upon them to be composed, and engage with him in prayer. He then offered a most earnest prayer, presenting before his heavenly Father the case of the multitude exposed without shelter, and earnestly entreating him, that as he gathered the winds in his fists, and stayed the bottles of heaven, that he would avert from the congregation the threatened torrent. The prayer was heard; the cloud which appeared coming right upon them was diverted from its course, but passed so near them, that they could see the heavy

drops falling into what was called the "deep pool," and a few drops were felt by those on the outer edge of the congregation. But not a person in the congregation was wet, although a few yards below there was a heavy rain, and a brook which emptied into the river close by was swollen to a torrent.

We do not say that there never was any impropriety in the conduct of those who attended these meetings. There were, as might be expected, thoughtless persons who behaved with levity. In later years when population increased, and the progress of trade brought an influx of a looser class, there were irregularities; but we do not think that there ever were those worst scenes, which Burns has described in his Holy Fair. And in the early years of his ministry, the utmost decorum prevailed, and to the godly they were scenes of spiritual enjoyment, which formed green spots in the wastes of memory, and indeed few of that generation could speak of them without emotion to the latest hour of their lives.

Amid these arduous labours, and the severe trials which he has described, he for some time felt something of the discouragement which he did on his first arrival. His good friend Donald MacKay, with whom he lodged, who, though having severe domestic trials, was a man of a cheerful turn of mind, used to employ all his efforts to enliven his times of depression. He used to relate the following as an instance: One day the Doctor had been up the East River, and returned home quite cast down. There was then no path, and travelling was along the shore. At Fish Pools, there is an overhanging rock close by the river. When the water is low, there are ledges on which one can pass without much trouble. But when the river is high, it is very difficult getting along, and if a person misses his footing, the water is deep, and he is certain to be completely drenched. On his way home he got into the water and was of course thoroughly wet. This, added to some other discouragements he had met with through the day, so affected him that he sat down in very low spirits. Donald came in, and seeing him in this state said, "You seem low spirited, what's the

matter." "Oh," said he, "I am done out. I can do no more. I must go home." "Go home!" said Donald, "and what will you do with those sheep in the wilderness? They 'll be bleating after you." "What is the use of my staying here? I am doing no good," was the Doctor's reply. "But you are only sowing the seed," Donald rejoined. "But there is no appearance of any fruit." "Is there not?" said Donald; "look at ———. Before you came here he was living utterly regardless of religion, and now see the change in him." He then went on to enumerate one instance after another of benefit from his ministrations. The Doctor's heart soon revived, so that he entered with cheerfulness into conversation, and Donald used to say that he never saw him so depressed afterward.

Gradually, however, he became so deeply interested in his work, so strongly attached to the people, and saw such manifest tokens of the blessing of God attending his labours, that all his depression entirely passed away. Writing in the year 1792 to the preachers at home, he says, "I have been here about six years, in as disadvantageous circumstances, I suppose, as any whom the Synod ever sent to this continent; and though indeed I have been in it, in weakness, in fear, in trembling, yet I account it the happiest thing that ever befell me, that I was sent to America. I had my reluctance, my struggle, ere I set off, but I have reason to bless God while I live, that I was not suffered to comply with the counsels of flesh and blood to stay at home. I am sure that all the world would not keep you out of America, if you only knew what it yields."

Indeed it seems clear that during these years a considerable change passed over his character. We are not able distinctly to trace its progress, but there seems sufficient evidence of the fact. During the first year or two his piety, though marked, was not of the depth and fervour of his later years. We have heard an instance, and only one, soon after his arrival, where he gave way to an angry impatience. It was at a diet of examination at the West River. It was held for the Gaelic people there, of whom there were but five families. Some of them

had been late in coming, which irritated him a little, but when he began to examine them he found most of them so ignorant, that he lost patience with them, and dismissed them with what was regarded as a very angry reproof. This was very different from his character in later years. In nothing was he more distinguished than by the perseverance with which he laboured to teach the ignorant; and the patience with which he bore with their slowness to receive instruction.

But there is evidence otherwise of the rapid growth of his piety during the first years of his ministry. The difficulties by which he was surrounded, the trials he was called to endure, and his lonely condition, led him to a closer walk with God. Those who lived in Donald MacKay's house, could tell of the hours he spent over his Bible, or in secret converse with God. To this he seems to allude in the following extract of an address on behalf of the Pictou Academy:

"It is now about thirty-eight years since I was missioned by the Associate Synod to Pictou, where my situation for some years was so discouraging, that I believe an angel from heaven could not have persuaded me that in my day there would be occasion for the application I am now making. Pictou, equal in extent to a large county, contained then nearly ninety families of various religious denominations, but chiefly Presbyterians, and so scattered that nowhere was one house to be found near another. They had no school, no road, no bridge; indeed they had scarcely any convenience. I could view myself in no other light than that of an exile from social enjoyments, not only for a while, but all my life, *but my despair of earthly comforts occasioned a more active application for those that were spiritual. I have, however, enjoyed a good share of both.*"

At all events the result was manifest to those who came in contact with him, in the ripened spirituality and the matured Christian experience characteristic of his after life.

It only remains to be noticed here that he soon reaped an abundant harvest. The whole community with a few exceptions were excited on the subject of religion, and a great change took place in its moral character. The letters of his friends in our possession, some of them written as early as 1788, all speak of their receiving intelligence from him of abundant success. Thus the Rev. A. Pringle, of Perth, writing on the 21st July

of that year, and noticing a letter from the Doctor of date 17th September 1787, says:

"I see by it and by some others which I have had occasion to read, that you are living on the fatness of God's house in the midst of a forest. It is easy with our glorious Master to turn a wilderness into a fruitful field. You say that you are happy and reconciled. I wonder not to hear you say so. Your ministry is blest, your people are prospering in religion, your enemies are confounded and silenced, and your own soul is thriving. I think that you have good reason to sing unto the Lord, for he is doing excellent things. I desire to rejoice with you and to join in returning all the praise to our common Lord.

"You complain of the want of British prayers. I fear you have too just reason. Yet I hope, that a warm concern for the success of the gospel in America is rather on the increase. I believe, a letter dropping in now and then, will tend greatly to quicken us. It is spring in Pictou, but autumn in Scotland. Our valley is full of dry bones, but we are living in hopes of a reviving breeze from the four winds. When it goes well with you, Oh, don't forget your old withered companions."

And the Rev. P. Buchanan thus writes under date 28th Oct. 1790:

"The account you give of the success of the gospel in your congregation is comfortable and refreshing indeed. May the gracious Lord be pleased to continue his favour in this respect, keep you and your congregation humble, that you may be always thankful and self-diffident, that you may by grace be kept from saying, 'I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing,' but another well qualified minister."

Similar remarks might be gleaned from the letters of other correspondents. But to all around the change on the community was visible. A writer in the Acadian Recorder for 1826, says:

"I was in Pictou when its oldest clergyman, Doctor MacGregor, began the exercise of his ministry among us. I could not imagine that he would be able to continue among us, for the people were few, and scattered over a large territory; none of them were rich, and they were of different religious denominations, though I must acknowledge to their honour that they conducted their divisions with mutual candour and forbearance. But after a little time, I found that the clergyman enjoyed the good will, the approbation, and esteem, of almost all the inhabitants. They came far and

near to hear him, by land and by water, though there were no roads, and but few boats (but canoes) in the place; and they heard not in vain. He in his turn travelled early and late to visit them in their houses, to press upon them all the duties of domestic piety. His labour was not lost. Piety and benevolence sprung up apace. Decency of conduct, peace and harmony among neighbours, with frugality and industry, flourished in Pictou for many a year. Often have I heard the happy state of Pictou envied in the neighbouring settlements."

The result of his labours appeared in the complete change which passed over the moral and religious condition of the community. It would be difficult to find a community any where in which the ordinances of religion were as regularly and universally observed, and the practical duties of godliness as conscientiously discharged, as they were throughout the district of Pictou. And this character it has in a good measure retained. There has been degeneracy—there has been an infusion of other elements with the worst results, but though the lustre of its early piety has been sometimes tarnished, it has never been extinguished. As a whole we have never seen a community in which all the duties of religion are as universally observed—and we have reason to hope that the seed sown will not be extinguished to the latest posterity.

CHAPTER X.

FIRST JOURNEY TO PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THAT COLONY, 1791.

"The Isles shall wait for his law."—Isa. xlii. 4.

THE next and one of his most important missionary journeys was to Prince Edward Island, and as that portion of the church enjoyed a larger share of his missionary labours, than any other place, except Pictou, as he was the means of *planting* the gospel through a very large portion of it, and as the cause of religion throughout its extent is deeply indebted to him, we shall give a brief account of its history and physical features.

Prince Edward Island, formerly called St. Johns, lies to the south of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and intervening between it and the Coasts of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, from which it is separated by the Straits of Northumberland, a channel varying in width from nine to forty miles. In its general form it resembles a crescent, lying in a direction from North West, to South East, with its hollow part toward the Gulf. Its greatest length is about 134 miles, and its greatest breadth about 34. But it is throughout so deeply indebted by bays and inlets of the sea, that scarcely any part is distant more than seven or eight miles from the influx of the tide. It contains an area of 2,134 square miles, or 1,360,000 acres.

The surface presents a very different aspect from the adjoining portions of the main land, being generally level, scarcely ever rising to any great elevation. The central portions, which are the most uneven, never rise into mountains, but form a succession of ridges, which present an agreeable variety of hill and

dale. Nowhere is the scenery grand, but every where it is picturesque and beautiful.

The soil is light and sandy, upon a stiff clay subsoil, which again rests on a very soft sandstone. It is generally of a light red colour, is remarkably free from stones, and is every where fertile, while it is never interrupted by those rocky tracts, which abound in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. It is peculiarly adapted for the raising of grain, but is not so well adapted for grazing purposes, as some portions of the neighbouring colonies.

This island was first colonized by the French, a number of whose descendants remain on it till the present day. But at the capitulation of Louisburg in 1758, it fell into the possession of the British, to whom it was confirmed by the treaty of 1763. It continued part of the Government of Nova Scotia till the year 1770, when it obtained a government of its own. In its early history a fatal error was committed, which has ever since been a cause of discontent, and which has materially retarded its prosperity to the present day. In one day in the year 1767, the whole soil of the Island, with some inconsiderable exceptions, was granted by the Home Government, in 67 townships, of about 20,000 acres each, to individuals supposed to possess claims upon it, chiefly officers of the army and navy, who had served in the preceding war. But what has chiefly hindered the settlement of the country, has been the terms upon which the proprietors have given their land to settlers. They in general have refused to give freehold titles, or if they did, the prices were entirely too high. But commonly they have given only leaseholds, a system against which there is in America an invincible repugnance, so that the best class of British emigrants have been attracted to other colonies.

By the terms of their grants, the proprietors were bound to settle their lots within ten years, to the extent of at least one person for every two hundred acres. Little, however was done to fulfil this obligation, and in the instances in which proprietors made an effort to do so, their arrangements were so badly

made, that settlers were landed in a state of entire destitution, and sometimes almost perished with hunger. It is even said that there were cases where in their extremity individuals had eaten human flesh. About the year 1771, some settlers arrived from Argyleshire, who settled on the west side of Richmond Bay. A year later a few more from the same quarter settled at Princetown. About the same time, a considerable body of Highland Catholics, brought out by Capt. MacDonald, settled at Tracadie. About the year 1774 and 1775, a number of others from Perthshire settled at Cove Head, St. Peters, &c., and a few from Morayshire at Cavendish, and a number from Dumfrieshire at Georgetown, and other places in its neighbourhood. At the peace of 1784, a number of Loyalists arrived, who settled principally at Bedeque. These were the principal settlements that had been made up till the time of the Doctor's first visit. The number of inhabitants at that time was small, and these were widely scattered. We may remark that, notwithstanding the disadvantages under which the island has been placed, it has in subsequent years rapidly increased in wealth and population.

Our readers, however, may suppose that at that time the country was both physically and socially in a very backward condition. There was not a road on the island, with the exception of one between Charlotte Town and Cove Head. There was scarcely even a blaze between other settlements. The greater part of the travelling was along shore, and there is one peculiarity of the island, which rendered this particularly difficult, viz., the number of deep creeks and inlets of the sea, which either rendered a long circuit necessary to go round them, or else must be crossed in canoes. Thus from Charlotte Town to Princetown, the course was to proceed up the banks of the Hillsborough, then cross to Cove Head, and thence to proceed along the north shore of the island. The physical appearance of the country, and the social state of the inhabitants will more particularly appear from his own narrative, to which we now return.

"I think it was this summer, (1790,)* that I paid the first visit to (St. John) Prince Edward Island. The session appointed me two Sabbaths to St. Peter's and two to Cove Head. Having taken a passage to Charlotte Town, the metropolis, sixty miles from Pictou harbour, I landed next day, after an agreeable passage. In a few minutes I found Charlotte Town to be wicked enough for a far larger town. Swearing and drunkenness abounded. I was directed to a Mr. Rae, a Scotch merchant, a sober man, with whom I lodged agreeably.

"Next day, I hired a horse, and rode out to Cove Head, sixteen miles, on an agreeable road. Near the end of my journey I missed my way, and calling at a house for information, met the landlord at the door, and asked him to show me the way to Mr. Millar's. Pointing with his hand across a creek or small bay, he said, 'There is Mr. Millar's. You have missed your way a little; but I will send a boy round with the horse, and put you across the creek in a canoe, and your way will be shorter than if you had not missed it. Please to walk in, and rest a little.' I thanked him for his kindness, accepted his invitation, and he gave my horse to a boy to take to Mr. Millar's. I found the inside of the house well furnished, and much more handsome and genteel than the outside warranted one to expect. I was quite surprised at seeing a good-like library, and a large one, considering the place. I was most agreeably entertained while I stayed. The gentleman easily found out what I was, and expressed his happiness that a Presbyterian minister had come to visit the Presbyterians there; but I had no courage to attempt ascertaining what he was. He accompanied me to Mr. Millar's, and addressed him thus: 'Mr. Millar, I have brought you what you have been long wishing for, a Presbyterian minister, and I hope he will do you much good.' Mr. Millar thanked him affectionately, and after a little conversation the gentleman returned home. After a cordial welcome from Mr. Millar, and mutual inquiries after one another's health, I asked who the gentleman might be? He replied, 'It is parson Des

* From his Memorabilia we learn that this first visit was in 1791.

Brisay, the Church of England clergyman of the island, a Calvinistic preacher, a man of liberal sentiments, and of a benevolent disposition.' 'And where does he preach? 'He rides every Sabbath to Charlotte Town, and preaches in the church there.' 'And why does he not reside in town?' 'It is a wicked place, and he is more retired and happy in the country.' I afterwards became acquainted with him, and was always welcome to preach in his church, which I uniformly did when I could make it convenient. His kindness ended not—but with his life."

This gentleman is worthy of more particular notice. He was a descendant of the exiled Huguenots of France, and had been originally a Presbyterian. When called upon to baptize the children of Presbyterians, he performed the service according to their mode, omitting the sign of the cross and praying extempore. He had entered the ministry with no just impressions of its duties and responsibilities. Describing to Doctor Keir afterward his state at that time, he said, "The Bishop asked me whether I had received the Holy Ghost,—poor Des Brisay had not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." He, however, became a devoted Christian, and decidedly evangelical and Calvinistic in his views, through the reading of the works of John Brown of Haddington, lent him by Mr. Millar. He then preached boldly and faithfully—preached "the truth as it is in Jesus;" and Charlotte Town, as the Doctor remarks, at that time abounding in wickedness, he faithfully reproved the prevailing sins in the highest as well as the lowest, even when his doing so gave great offence in high quarters, and among his own relatives.

But he was particularly distinguished by his catholicity of spirit. All the ministers of our church, who visited the island in his time, were welcome to the use of his church to preach in, and they frequently availed themselves of the privilege. He even invited them to preach for him, he going through the Church of England service, while they preached afterwards. On one occasion the late Rev. Duncan Ross was in Charlotte Town, in company with Robert Marshall. At the end of the

week, having failed in obtaining a passage home, Mr. Des Brisay asked him to preach for him on Sabbath. Mr. Ross consented, and asked at what time the service would begin? "Oh!" said Mr. D., "*you* may come about 12 o'clock; I begin my services at 11, but I know that you don't care for them, and Deacon Marshall hates them." The late Doctor Keir mentioned to the author, that on his arrival on the island, Mr. D. had treated him with great kindness, and continued to do so as long as he lived. We feel it due to his memory in this connection to bear this testimony to his liberality of spirit and kindness of heart.

"I found that Mr. Millar was from the parish of Muthil, twelve miles from Loch Earne, where I was born. He told me of Mr. Lawson, MacEwan, and others, who came out at the same time. At hearing Mr. Lawson's name, I instantly recollected that when I was a little boy, I heard much talk of a Mr. Lawson and others going out to America. They were decoyed out by one of the great proprietors to settle his land. They were to pay a shilling of rent per acre, and they thought it cheap till they came out and saw it; but then they found it dear enough. After them came a number from Dumfriesshire, who settled here and in St. Peter's. On their first arrival they were like to perish with hunger, as the few settlers who were before them had little enough for themselves; and they could not all have lived, had not a number of them got over to Pictou, and obtained relief there from the old settlers."

The intercourse with these people was peculiarly pleasant, as they were from the neighbourhood of his native parish. This itself afforded the means of much interesting and pleasing conference, particularly as the instances were very few, after his arrival in this country, where he met with any such. But in addition, he met with some who were acquainted with his relatives. We have seen a spinning-wheel which was one of a number brought out by them, made by an uncle of his, and which though now about a century old is still fit for service. And in one instance, if not more, he met with an old school-fellow. The fol-

lowing used to be related by the late Mr. John Anderson, who lived at the east point of Prince Edward Island. On the Doctor's first visit to Prince Edward Island, after Mr. Anderson's arrival in the country, the latter having heard that a Presbyterian minister had come to Charlotte Town, proceeded thither to meet him. At that time there was no road through the country; but all who travelled had to keep along shore, and cross the rivers and bays at the outlet, (for there were no bridges,) in canoes or boats, till they came to Cove Head. Then they came across the portage to the Hillsborough, and down along its banks to Charlotte Town. So eager was he to have an interview with a minister, that he set out on foot, and travelled on as rapidly as he could till he reached town, which he did early in the morning. On inquiring for the minister, he was told that he had not yet risen, being wearied with his labours. The Doctor on learning that a person wished to see him, sent for him to his bed-room. On comparing notes, they found that they had lived at the same place in Scotland, and attended the same school. The Doctor at first could not make him understand who he was. At last he asked, "Do you not mind a little boy called Jemmy Drummond?" "Oh yes, and are you Jemmy Drummond?" This the old man used to relate with a glistening eye and a full heart.

The Mr. Millar mentioned above was a very pious and intelligent man. He was one of the few out and out Seceders then in the country, having been a member of Mr. Barlas' congregation in Crieff, in which the Doctor was brought up, and was well versed in Theology. The Doctor and he became great friends, but they differed widely on the New Light question; Mr. Millar being a strong Old Light man, and a vehement advocate for the employment of the power of the civil Magistrate in the suppression of heresy. On one occasion when the Doctor was at his house, they got into conversation on the subject. While the Doctor was shaving, Millar spoke for some time with considerable vehemence on the subject. It seemed to excite the Doctor a little, for he said, "Stop, stop, you have made me

cut myself. Let us talk of those things about Christ in which we agree *till our hearts yet warm*, and then we will discuss these points afterwards,"—a good advice in reference to all discussions among professing Christians regarding the course they should pursue as to those points on which they differ.

"The people of Cove Head and St. Peter's were not without knowledge, for they had good books, which they lent to one another, and the roads to Charlotte Town being tolerable, they had opportunities at times of hearing Mr. Des Brisay. Nevertheless, they rejoiced greatly in the visit of a Presbyterian minister, and heard the gospel with every appearance of delight. Some of them got their children baptized regularly by Mr. Des Brisay; some would not employ him on any account; and others did not know what to do. Some, after waiting for the chance of a Presbyterian minister till they had four children, gave up hopes and applied to him. To some I baptized two, three, four, and to one man six children. These two settlements, which are sixteen miles apart, united in a petition to the Synod for a minister, which I undertook to forward, telling them at the same time that there were two applications before theirs unanswered. I preached two Sabbaths at each of the places; the first and last at Cove Head, because it was nearest Charlotte Town, whence I expected to sail for Pictou, and I wished to be at Charlotte Town as soon as possible after my work was done, that I might not miss a passage, as one was seldom to be found.

"After sermon the fourth Sabbath, a man from Princetown, thirty miles west of Cove-Head, waited on me with a petition from the people of Princetown to visit them, and spend a few Sabbaths among them, as they had not seen a minister since their first settlement there. This petition involved me in a great dilemma, as the time allowed me by the Session was now out, and if I went at all, I could not decently give them less than two Sabbaths more, and I did not know how many weeks more I might have to wait for a passage. On weighing the case, I judged it my duty to comply, and set off with the man

on Monday morning, sometimes walking, sometimes riding, and sometimes sailing. Our way was chiefly along shore, at times on a beautiful beach of fine sand, and at times among rocks and stones almost impassable; while at the ferries we had to venture in small canoes, and tow the horse after us. The island horses are used to swimming, and in this manner often cross ferries half a mile wide. One horse swam across Richmond Bay, which is six miles over. The man informed me that the Princetown people had mostly emigrated from Cantyre in Argyleshire, nearly twenty years before, and had been all that time destitute of the gospel: that ignorance abounded; that secret and family prayer was generally, if not universally, neglected; and that there were about sixty unbaptized children in the settlement; and that the common way of obtaining baptism was by carrying the children to Charlotte Town to Mr. Des Brisay, who, according to the custom of the Church of England, made no difference between the children of the most profane and of the most holy, but baptized them all. Thinking upon these things I was brought to my wit's end, for I could not baptize the children of people so ignorant and negligent; yet, if I refused to baptize them they would not believe me to be a true minister, or to know anything about the gospel. But I had one great comfort:—'Go disciple them, baptizing them—teaching them; and, lo! I am with you.'

"We reached Princetown on Monday evening, and I lodged with Donald Montgomery all the time I stayed. I do not know if I took the best way for doing good to the people, but I took the way I thought best. I preached only the Sabbath-days, and employed all the week-days in conversation, especially with those who had children to baptize. I sent information through the settlement that I would baptize no children till I had conversed with their parents, and was convinced that they meant to live like good Christians, and bring up their children as such. I concerted with Donald Montgomery to divide the settlement into two parts, one for each week, and each part into five sub-divisions for five days of each week, directing each

sub-division to come as regularly as matters would allow. By a little conversation I generally found out what instruction they most needed. Though sometimes three or four were with me at once, I gave less or more instruction to every individual. They were especially deficient in their views of the odiousness of sin before God, of their guilt and defilement by it, of the danger of depending on their own righteousness (indeed, this was their main trust, though they would instantly agree that their good works could not save them), and in their knowledge of the character, offices, and work of Christ, and of the nature of his salvation; as also of the office and work of the Holy Spirit. Prayer was neglected. They did not work on Sabbath, but it was not kept holy to the Lord. Few were guilty of any flagrant violation of the duties of the second table of the law, yet few had any just conceptions of them.

"I admitted to baptism all who agreed to the following things:—First, That as sin, death, and the curse came into the world by Adam; so pardon, life, and the blessing came by Christ. Secondly, That they renounced all dependence upon their own righteousness, and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation from sin and misery. Thirdly, That as they had been hitherto careless and ignorant, they must henceforth be diligent to grow up in religious knowledge. Fourthly, That as they depended on God for every blessing for themselves and their families, so they purposed to pray to him, and worship him every morning and evening in the family and closet.

"Also, I made inquiry of neighbours, as circumstances would allow, concerning the moral conduct of each applicant, and where there were particular exceptions, I exacted a promise of reformation. This was all the preparation for baptism to which I thought I could attain, and of some I had good hopes; but of others I had great reason for fears. Indeed, the two weeks which I passed at Princetown, were the two most anxious which I ever passed in this world; to which the following incident greatly contributed.

"When I came to the tent on Sabbath, I found a crowd of people (not a large assembly), all standing and talking, as I had seen in the fairs of Scotland, as if they had met on a week-day for some secular business. I desired them to sit down and be silent, as we were to begin the public worship of God. Some obeyed, but the greater part continued standing and talking. I called to silence a second and a third time, and some more obeyed; but others did not. The only plan I could then think of was to read the psalm so loud as to drown their voices, and after a little it had the desired effect. The first sermon was in Gaelic, and at the end of it I baptized the children of the Highlanders. In the afternoon the talk was not so loud nor so stubborn; it was, however, sufficiently discouraging, though an evident reformation had taken place. At the close of the sermon I baptized a number of children in English—in all, about thirty.

"I spent the second week much as the first, and on the second Sabbath I baptized about thirty more children. Between the Sabbaths I rode to a neighbouring settlement, and baptized six children to one man. Of all that applied for baptism about Princetown, I rejected only one man, who absolutely refused to keep up the worship of God in his family, and he went the next day and got his child baptized by a Popish priest.* I believe numbers more would have done the same had they been refused.

"I had great fears that many of them would turn out a disgrace to religion and to me; but herein I have been happily disappointed. During the week several came to me, inquiring if I could direct them how to get a minister to Princetown. I desired them to consult among themselves, and promised, that if they agreed about it, I would write a petition for them, and forward it home. I wrote it, accordingly, and it was subscribed after sermon; but I had to tell them that I was afraid it would not be soon answered, as there were two others besides—from

* This man, who was named MacDonald, continued a Papist, and his descendants belong to the same persuasion to this day.

Cove Head and St. Peter's—that should be answered before it, and that I perceived that young ministers were backward to come to this country. I promised, however, to do my best for them.

"When I was at Princetown I went, by invitation, to a neighbour's house to breakfast; and when it was over, I told them that, as they had been so long without a minister to tell them their duty, I was afraid they neglected the worship of God. The head of the family replied that they did. I said that it was not enough that every individual in the family worshipped God in secret—the family should worship God together, because they committed many family sins, and enjoyed many family mercies, and needed many more; and that, if they had no objection, I would perform it on this occasion, as a directory for them. He replied, that they would be much obliged to me. Having got the Bible, I sung a short psalm, read a chapter, kneeled and prayed; but none of the family either sung or kneeled—whence I inferred that they had never seen family worship before, and, of course, that it was not common in the country. But I had not confidence to tell them of it.

"I took an opportunity to ask of Donald Montgomery how it happened that there was so much gabbling at the beginning of public worship on the first Sabbath, and not on the second. He replied that he and others were ashamed of it; and that it was owing, in part, to some Roman Catholics that were there, and in part to their youngsters born there; for none of them ever heard a sermon, and some of them were nineteen years of age."

The only other fact worthy of mention that we have been able to gather regarding his first visit to Princetown, is that at the time there was a malignant fever prevailing there, afterward called the Highland fever, so called because it had been introduced by a number of Highland emigrants that had arrived shortly before. They were landed on the beach, and placed in a shed, where they were much exposed to the inclemencies of

the weather. It proved very fatal among them, and also extended to the families already residing in the place. The Doctor visited them, prayed with them, and he also exhorted the people to take them into their houses, which at his request, some of them did.

"I was so concerned for my passage home, all the time I was at Princetown that I seldom neglected, in my addresses at the throne of grace, to beg of my heavenly Father, that if it was agreeable to his will he would provide me a passage, so that I could be home the following Sabbath; and, accordingly, I resolved to leave Princetown early on Monday morning, lest, by a little delay, I should lose a passage; but before I got ready, numbers came to bid me farewell, so that I was detained a while, and could hardly tear myself from them; and, having to call at some houses in Cove Head, I was obliged to stay there all night, and heard nothing of a passage. Early on Tuesday morning I set off for Charlotte Town; and about a mile from it met Mr. Rae, going to the country, of whom I asked if he knew of any vessel going soon to Nova Scotia. He replied, 'What a pity that you are so late! it is not an hour since a schooner sailed for Pictou.' 'Oh, I cannot believe you,' said I; she *could* not go without me, when I was so near.* But I cannot stay to talk: can you tell me the captain's name, and where he lodged?' 'Worth is his name, and he lodged with Brecon.' I hastened to Brecon's, and asked if Captain Worth was there. The answer was, 'Yes.' I thanked the God of heaven, and asked if I might see him. Being introduced to him I asked, 'Can you give me a passage to Nova Scotia?' 'Yes, if you will be content with the accommodation which I have.' 'It will be very poor unless I be content with it. When do you sail?' 'In ten minutes' time.' 'Very good, that answers me well. I have to call for a gentleman, and I will be

* In telling this incident he used to say that when informed that there *had been* a vessel for Pictou, he felt that it was just *impossible* that she could have gone, and his mind was at once set at rest. In his Memorabilia he mentions the same as an example of the efficacy of prayer.

back within ten minutes.' In fifteen minutes we were on board Captain Worth's vessel, and I felt very happy and thankful.

"When the anchor was weighed, and the sails set, Captain Worth said to me, 'Well, Mr. MacGregor, I was as ready to sail yesterday at this time as I am now, and the wind has been fair all the time, and I could not go; but I know not what kept me.' 'That is strange,' said I; 'what could hinder you?' 'I cannot tell; I had nothing to do, and I wished to go; but it seems I could not.' 'Why,' said I, 'it seems you had to wait for me.' 'I believe,' said he, 'that is the very thing, whatever be in it.' I told him my detention, by going to Princetown, and my anxiety about a passage, when he said he was happy in being the instrument, in the hand of Providence, to give me a passage. We had a prosperous voyage; and I saw not Captain Worth again till after thirty years, when he reminded me of the above, and more conversation which we had on board. I got home on Thursday to my own people, who were sorry at my long absence, but satisfied with the reason of it.

"As soon as I got the things that were behind in the congregation, by my absence, brought to their place, I set about writing a pressing letter to the Synod, urging the sending out of four young ministers, or if they could not send them all, some at least, to those congregations that were perishing for lack of knowledge.

"I represented the destitute state of Prince Edward Island in general; that I had not preached in Charlotte Town, nor in a number of other small settlements, who never had the gospel preached to them; that Mr. Des Brisay seldom preached but in town; that the only other clergyman in the island was a Catholic priest; and that the most gospel they got was from Methodists. But all the answer that I got next summer was, that the Synod sympathized with me, but could find no one willing to come to my assistance.

"I had this year applications to preach at Onslow, where I had preached once before, and from Stewiacke, where I had not; but I could not answer them. Six weeks was a long time for my congregation in the best time of the year, considering that I had to preach in two languages, and in two places far distant from one another.

CHAPTER XI.

GENERAL VIEW OF MISSIONARY JOURNEYS.

"In journeyings often." 2 Cor. xi. 26.

As we have now entered upon his missionary journeys, which occupied so large a portion of his attention from this time forward, it may be as well to give some general account of the state of travelling at that time, and of his general mode of procedure on such excursions. The following amusing account of the state of travelling in the early settlement of the country first appeared in the Recorder for 1827.*

"Mr. H., the improvement of our roads and bridges is one of the best, if not the very best, which our Legislature has ever effected. The contrast is great indeed between the state of the roads now, and at the beginning of this century, twenty-six years ago. Many a story have I heard from my father, Basil Wisewood, of the disasters which befell travellers in his time, when there was only one road in the Province deserving the name, viz., that from Halifax to Windsor, and Annapolis. And with wonder I have heard him tell, that the road cost as much as would pave it all over with dollars. The people of the

* It formed part of a series of articles of an amusing character, which appeared under the title of the "Busybody," the writer or more properly writers of which assumed the name of Solomon Wisewood. We have found the draft of this among Doctor MacGregor's papers in his own handwriting, from which we infer that it was a contribution of his to the series. It indicates that he possessed a vein of humour, had he chosen to exercise or cultivate it.

best settlements found their way to this road or to one another by a blaze, that is, a mark made on the trunk of a tree here and there, in the proper course, for the purpose of directing travellers; but in the younger settlements, travellers had to provide pocket compasses, and guessing their course, find their way through the forest much in the same way as sailors do along the sea. By the by, Mr. H., pocket compasses formed in those days a considerable article of our infant commerce, though it is now ousted, and almost forgotten.

"In going by the compass the traveller sometimes, widely mistaking his course, missed entirely the intended settlement, and came in upon another, or missed all settlements, and travelled on, till he lost all hope of seeing a house, in which case he often believed the compass itself went wrong; and discrediting it, he would wander he knew not whither. Sometimes the traveller would be confounded desperately, for the compass needle would obstinately refuse to traverse, and he could not know East from West, North from South. I cannot recollect his description of its wonderful vibrations and whirling, to the no small terror and amazement of the traveller.

"Travelling by a blaze was little better. He told us strange things of losing the blaze, and the impossibility of finding it again, of striking out a straightforward course, independent of the blaze, and yet, by and by, coming upon their own track again,—of the snow being so driven against the trees as to hide the blaze, and causing frequent stops to rub it off,—of its being so deep as to cover the blaze, and causing frequent stops to dig away the snow in order to discover it—of travellers being benighted by such stops, and lodging in the forest where they had to kindle large fires on the top of the snow, four or six feet deep, and there (dismal to be told!) one side next the fire was roasted, and the other frozen. I have heard him tell of experienced travellers, who in such a case would kindle two fires, at a proper distance from one another, and lie down between them, and enjoy themselves luxuriously between two *fires*. In those days swamps were avoided as intolerable. The

steep mountain sides were preferable, and hence there are still many hills on our roads which might now be easily avoided.

"I have heard him tell of great dangers and hairbreadth escapes from drowning in crossing brooks and rivers swollen with unexpected rains; for in those days no journey would be undertaken immediately after a heavy rain. He had himself to wait different times for two or three days nearly fasting until the subsiding of the water rendered the river passable. He told of horses swagging in swamps almost to their ears, and of the great difficulty of their riders. There were few taverns, but every man who had a hut was hospitable."

As we have given his account of travelling in the early state of the country, we may give his remarks upon the condition of the roads at the time he wrote:

"Such were the difficulties of travelling in this Province within these forty years. How great and how happy is the change now! Hills are levelled and valleys are filled up; the crooked places are made straight, and the rough places plain. A duke in his coach and six may ride in safety from end to end of the Province. This is saying much, but truth demands it. A busy body, however, can still see many faults, and much need of improvements. The best of our roads need to be made better, and much more the worst, and many new ones are needed. They are in general wofully soft in the spring and fall, crying out for gravel or MacAdam. The bridges too are sadly mismanaged, being made of green timber, which cannot last. Were the timber seasoned for a year before it is used, how much firmer and more durable would the bridges be!"

His picture of the courses of the roads will be recognized as true, by many still living.

"It was not practicable at first to lay off the proper courses of these great roads, for they were imperfectly known, and the different settlements being connected together by such blazes and footpaths, as suited themselves. It was best at first to make improvements on these paths, so that travelling might be safe. But it is time now to look to the interests of the whole

—especially of the extremes, who will have long journeys to the metropolis, however straight the roads be made. To every alteration of any consequence, opposition will be made. Every village, every man of selfish views, every tavern keeper, every miller, and every blacksmith, will be loth to see it taken farther from them. But the convenience of individuals or villages are not to be compared with the accommodation of the public. There are at present many deviations from this rule; but the greatest I recollect is in the north road to the east, in its course through that famous flourishing place, Pictou. Travelling some time ago towards the east end of the Province, when I reached the brow of Mount Thom, where the North coast, and the Eastern country are first seen, I stopped to view the scene. Right before me I saw Pictou Harbour and the ocean, and I think the skirts of the town. To the East and South, the land extended farther than my sight could carry. I saw instantly that hereabouts the road to Merigomish and the East should part from the Pictou road, and point toward the head of Merigomish harbour; but I had to follow the Pictou road, eight or ten miles farther to Blanchards. There I parted with it by a great angle, crossed the West River, and after some time ascended a mountain long and steep, more so I believe than any other in the Province. When I passed the steep and reached the clear land a little higher, I had a fine prospect to the South and East; and on my right hand, I saw a long level tract through which the road might have come, so as to escape the hill and be much shorter. Then I began a long descent, squinting down the stream till I came to the mill, where I crossed the Middle River on a good bridge; and immediately turned up the river on the road by which the Middle River people go to Halifax by Upper Stewiacke, so that here I was travelling nearly back about a mile. I then turned to the East River and crossed it, but instead of keeping right on to the head of Merigomish harbour, I had to go two miles down the river to New Glasgow, on the road which leads to Pictou, where, had I kept it eight miles farther, I would have met the road which I left

at Blanchards so far behind. I turned off at New Glasgow, and began to ascend another mountain for about two miles, and when I reached its top, I saw on my right hand another long level tract, where the road would have been much shorter, and escaped the mountain wholly. Descending thence by a long and gradual slope, I found upon enquiry that the course of the road led into Merigomish harbour, two or three miles below its head. Therefore it turned again to the right, and at last gained the desired point, the head of Merigomish harbour.

"Pausing here, I could not but smile at the sagacity of Pictou people as road makers, and pity those who have to travel so many needless miles. Many a shilling must they leave in the Pictou taverns, and many a cold blast must they endure along its mountains, which a right direction of the road would save."

Reverting, however, to the state of travelling at the commencement of his career, we observe that as remarked above he often travelled long distances, where there was no road at all, and where he and his fellow-travellers were obliged to shape their course by a pocket compass, and this through the forest. In these cases, of course, the travelling was all on foot. This involved great toil. The forests of Nova Scotia do not present the appearance which we have seen in some other parts of America, where the trees are far apart, and the ground so level that a carriage might be driven between them. But the trees generally are close together, with a considerable undergrowth of small bushes. From the thinness of the soil in many places, they abound in windfalls. The roots of these carry up the soil, which again falls and forms little hillocks known in this country as cradle hills. The difficulty of passing through a forest of this kind was increased by the irregular surface of the country. Almost every part of the Province is traversed by hills, the sides of which are sometimes steep—deep ravines intersect the path of the traveller,—while the valleys present much ground that is low and boggy, and thus wet at all seasons of the year. But from the amount of snow falling, and the slowness

with which it melted, even the very driest were scarcely dry even at midsummer. Under these circumstances, the traveller was obliged to brush through a thick undergrowth of bushes, sometimes to climb over or creep under a windfall, and again to spring from one root to another over boggy spots. At one time he was obliged to toil up a steep ascent, at another to cross a brook by a single fallen tree, on which it required the whole skill of a rope dancer to preserve his equilibrium, and which was not always successful in preventing his having a thorough wetting in it, while again he might be seen clambering up its banks, by laying hold of the bushes with which it was lined. In this work Doctor MacGregor, in the days of his strength, was remarkably active, rivalling those born in the forest. As one of my informants said, he never saw any person from the old country so smart in going through the woods.

We may remark here, that while the forest added to his toils, his natural sense of beauty was often charmed, and his admiration for the glories of nature excited by its magnificence and grandeur. Woods still cover a great part of Nova Scotia, but along any of the lines of travel, there is now to be seen only comparatively small trees, and these commonly second growth. All the woods fit for timber, except in remote districts, has been taken to market; but then the forest was the undisturbed growth of ages. Trees then met his view, which must have been standing when Columbus embarked on his first voyage for the Western world. These appeared in the most promiscuous style. "Many varieties," says MacGregor, "of the pine, intermingled with birch, maple, beech, oak, and numerous other tribes, branch luxuriantly over the banks of lakes and rivers, extend in stately grandeur along the plains, and stretch proudly up to the very summits of the mountain. It is impossible to exaggerate the autumnal beauty of these forests; nothing under heaven can be compared to its effulgent grandeur. Two or three frosty nights, in the decline of autumn, transform the boundless verdure of a whole empire into every possible tint of brilliant scarlet, rich violet, every shade of blue and

brown, vivid crimson, and glittering yellow. The stern, inexorable fir tribes alone maintain their eternal sombre green. All others in mountains or in valleys burst into the most glorious vegetable beauty, and exhibit the most splendid and most enchanting panorama on earth."

As he passed through the forest in its original grandeur he often felt awed as if passing amid the stately pillars of the temple of nature.

> "This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks,
> Bearded with moss, and in garments indistinct in the twilight,
> Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad and prophetic,
> Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosom.
> Loud from its rocky caverns the deep voiced neighbouring ocean
> Speaks, and in accents disconsolate, answers the wail of the forest."*

When emerging into some open space he beheld the forest stretching before him over hill and valley, in the various shades of green and summer luxuriance, or in the richer glories of autumn, he would stop to gaze and call the attention of his companions to the scene, who, however, saw in the forest only an impediment to their industry, and a hindrance to the progress of the country, and knew no duty with regard to it, but to remove it from the surface of the earth as speedily as possible.

The danger of losing the course, while traversing the forest, is more common than most persons would imagine; and what is singular, a person losing his way is most likely to come back upon his own track, or to the very spot from which he set out. To obviate this danger the first step in the march of improvement was to *blaze*, as it was termed, the course between different places. This consisted merely in taking a chip off each side of trees at short distances apart along the line of travel. By taking a chip off *each* side the person going in either direction has something to guide him. Looking forward he sees before him the tree from which a chip has been taken, and making his way to it, by a glance ahead sees the next tree that is blazed, and so onward. By habit a quickness is acquired in discover-

* Longfellow's "Evangeline."

ing the course, which in ordinary circumstances enables a person to proceed with considerable ease and rapidity. But in other cases, there are considerable difficulties, which he has amusingly sketched in the extract given above.

The next step was to make a road, as it was called. This, however, consisted merely in cutting out the trees on the line of travel, sufficiently to form a sort of bridle path. The stumps were not removed, nor was the ground levelled or thrown up. This, however, enabled the traveller to proceed on horseback. This was so much gained, but if any modern thinks, that this secured more rapid locomotion, he only betrays his ignorance of the subject. A good walker would not only keep up with a traveller on horseback, but often get ahead of him. The ground was generally soft, and sometimes so deep, that the horse could scarcely carry his rider; and from a peculiar instinct of the species, one horse would always place his foot in the track made by his predecessor, so that the road, so called, got into deep holes, in regular order where each stepped. In the course of a year or two the young trees began to grow up—the stumps that had been left in the ground began to send up sprouts, and the branches of the trees alongside the road, began, in utter disregard of all laws regarding His Majesty's Highway, to extend across the path prepared for his lieges. So that the traveller was in danger, either of being brushed from his saddle, or, at all events, of being rudely scratched by the branches, unless he was expert enough to parry them off as he advanced, which if there had been any rain just previous, would be sure to afford him the benefits of a shower bath. So thick would they grow, that travellers approaching from opposite directions, would sometimes not perceive one another until they were just in contact.

In winter, travelling became attended with some additional difficulties. The snow fell in the forests to the depth of three or four feet, and we have heard well authenticated instances, where towards spring it was measured and found to be actually over six and even seven feet deep. Of course travelling with

horses was then out of the question. And the only mode of travelling was by snow shoes. As remarked by Mr. Clarke, of Amherst, "the untrodden snow bank was his railroad — the snow shoe the only car upon which he was mounted,—while of his earthly house, the *collar beam* bore along his entire baggage."

The use of snow shoes was adopted by the early settlers from the Indians. They consisted of a wooden frame of an oval shape, but with the ends elongated to a point, about two feet long and about one wide. Across this leathern thongs were stretched at equal distances, and others again crossed at right angles, interlacing them so as to form a net work. In this way such a broad surface is presented under the feet, that a traveller can easily pass over snow of ordinary firmness without sinking. But this mode of travelling was at times very laborious. When the snow was very soft, the snow shoes sank in it and became clogged, or when it was very hard, they were apt to slide. But the chief difficulty was for strangers to become accustomed to their use. Such persons are sure to trip themselves every few steps, and to roll helplessly in the snow. To travel with ease upon them requires a peculiar tact, which is only acquired by practice, and some never become expert at this mode of travelling. It is necessary to walk with the feet wide apart, otherwise the snow shoes strike one another, and trip the unfortunate pedestrian; and each foot must be lifted up in a peculiar manner, with the toes as high as the heel, or the whole foot together, otherwise the forward point will catch in the snow, with the same result. But when expertness is acquired, it becomes an easy mode of communication. Old persons have assured me that in their youth they would travel a long distance in that way, with greater ease to themselves, if the snow were suitable, than they could the same distance on the best road they ever saw.

Doctor MacGregor, of course, had his difficulty in acquiring expertness in a mode of conveyance so entirely new to him, but being active on his feet he after a time became quite expert at

it. The Indians to whom he had been very kind, and of whose skill in guiding their way through the intricacies of the forest he sometimes gladly availed himself, made him a present of a pair, nicely ornamented, which he retained all his days. As the hard leathern soles of his boots cut the thongs of the snow shoes, it was necessary to use moccasins. These were made of green hide taken from the lower legs of the ox, or more commonly of the moose. These last they purchased from the Indians, who had a way of making them soft and pliable by rubbing them between their hands. Let not my lady readers be shocked at the idea of our writing the biography of a man, whose nether extremities were encased in "shanks," as they were termed, or moccasins of untanned hide. We are describing not a modern, refined, kid-gloved man-milliner of a preacher. We are describing a veritable man of labour, and one who bent himself to his work in the true spirit of endurance. Behold him then equipped for his journey. His boots are taken off and deposited in his knapsack, which was generally carried by one of his companions, his feet are encased in the afore described moccasins, over his legs are drawn what were called "Indian leggins," a sort of overall made of blue cloth, with a red stripe down each side, and fitting closely about the feet and strapped down, while the faithful racket (snow shoes) that is to bear him safely onward, is fastened to his feet by leathern thongs round the ancles; and whether you count him fit for your drawing-rooms or not, he is fully equipped to go on his errand of mercy to seek out the solitary dweller in the wood, and to gather the lost sheep of the desert into the Redeemer's fold.

These journeys were not without danger, as he experienced. Travellers often became benighted, and though they might be provided for encamping in the woods, yet at other times they lost their way and, becoming exhausted, were unable to kindle a fire in those days when lucifer matches were among the undiscovered wonders of the Nineteenth Century, or running short of food were unable to reach their intended destination,

and perished. That this was no imaginary danger will appear from the subsequent history, but especially from the following entry in Halliburton's history, for the year 1795 : "The Rev. Mr. Lloyd, Missionary at Chester, loses his way in a snow storm, while on his route through the woods to Windsor, and is frozen to death."

In summer the easiest way of travelling was along shore, or along the edges of rivers. But this had its difficulties. The shore was often encumbered with drift wood, or piled up with stones, which, however interesting to a geologist, were very awkward for the pedestrian. In some places the tide rose so high that it was necessary to clamber up steep banks to get along. At other places the ground was soft and boggy, particularly at small creeks, which often rendered it necessary to make a long circuit to go round the head of them, and greatly increased the distance travelled.

But oftentimes these waters must be crossed, which was frequently a work of considerable difficulty. His narrative affords examples of the principal modes by which it was accomplished. The smaller rivers could commonly be forded on horseback, but pedestrians sometimes adopted the somewhat school-boy mode of walking on stilts, which were kindly provided, *pro bono publico*, by good Samaritans, and left at the banks of the stream for the convenience of travellers. But soon bridges were constructed of rough logs, on which travellers were sometimes in as great danger as when there were none. The broader and deeper streams required to be crossed in canoes, sometimes the birch bark canoe of the Micmac Indian being employed, at other times the kind more commonly used by the whites, which consisted of a single tree hollowed out.

It may seem an attempt to impose upon the credulity of our readers, but we have heard of persons crossing creeks of some width on cakes of ice. A minister of our church, still living, can tell of such an adventure. Travelling early in the spring, he and his companions came to a creek, which he saw no means of crossing. The ice having been broken up, several cakes

were lying along the shore. His companions launched one of these cakes, and got upon it, having first cut two poles as means of propulsion. They called upon him to join them, which he did, only after a good deal of persuasion, when they commenced "poling," as it is termed, their frail bark across the watery element, and safely reached the other side. We have not heard an instance in which Dr. MacGregor crossed a stream in this manner, but it is more than likely that he did so, and at all events the incident shows the sort of shifts to which it was then necessary to resort.

Besides the crossing of rivers and creeks, a work of still more danger was the crossing the sea in his voyages to Prince Edward Island, Cape Breton, and New Brunswick. There was then no steamer to carry the traveller with regularity and despatch. In his later years, sailing packets plied between Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, but in his early career, it was only occasionally that he could obtain even a sailing vessel to transport him across; while very commonly he made these voyages of forty, sixty, or it might be a hundred miles in open boats, some of them being large half-decked boats built expressly for such voyages. Like his Master crossing the sea of Galilee, his only accommodation was the humble fishing boat, in which darkness and peril must alike be encountered.

On one occasion coming either from Prince Edward Island, or Miramichi in a schooner, he was overtaken by a violent storm, so that even the crew felt a little alarmed. They were at sea over Sabbath, and the storm having somewhat abated, he read to them the 107th Psalm, and preached on our Saviour stilling the storm.

The only other circumstance regarding the physical state of travelling which we deem it necessary to notice, is the poor accommodation to which he was obliged to submit. A hearty welcome he was almost certain to receive, but his fare was often of the humblest kind, while a hard couch, the scanty covering of which ill-protected him from the cold, was his only bed. In

fact such privations as we have already described as endured in Pictou, he suffered when travelling abroad, with this difference however, that at home his visiting was principally in winter, while his travelling abroad was generally in summer. But whatever privations were in his way he cheerfully endured. Not only so, but we have heard of his purposely staying with poor people, when he might have had better accommodation elsewhere. On one occasion a man having travelled with him from Bedeque to Lot Sixteen, Prince Edward Island, the Doctor lodged in his house, although the man had to borrow a loaf and candle from one of his neighbours. This he did, though the man scarcely asked it, and though he might have been comfortably provided for elsewhere, because he knew it would be a gratification to the poor man.

On these journeys he acted almost literally on the divine injunction, certainly in the spirit of it, "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass, in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves, for the workman is worthy of his meat." He used to say that he had gone from home with a supply of money in his pockets, and had come back with them empty, but that at other times he had left with them empty or but scantily supplied, and he had returned with them full. Generally he took just a little to provide against emergencies, but otherwise he set forth trusting that his Master would provide for him. In this he was not disappointed. The people were everywhere hospitable, they provided for his wants, and brought him on his journey, and even made collections, which they gave to him. In this way his expenses were moderate. He used to say that he had travelled all the way up above Fredericton, in New Brunswick, a distance of about 300 miles and back, at an expense of only twenty shillings.

Feeling the importance of his work, he was accustomed on leaving to solicit the prayers of the pious among his flock. On his way leaving he has frequently called at the hut of Robert

Marshall, and said, "I have just called in to ask you to pray for me when I am away."

In these journeys he generally had companions—and so much was his company valued, that men who did not show much regard for religion, who accompanied him on some of his journeys often declared, that they were more than repaid by the pleasure of his conversation, both for their time and trouble. He kept up an incessant stream of edifying conversation. Much of this was directly on religious subjects, and whatever subject came up he would give it a religious turn. Reflections of a pious nature were finely interspersed with conversation on ordinary topics, and this so naturally as showed them to be the spontaneous effusion of a heart occupied with sacred things, and whose religion mingled with the whole current of its thoughts and emotions. But much of his conversation, particularly on long journeys, was of a more general character, embracing a very wide range of topics. At one time he might be found instructing them in the mysteries of nature—at another, relating anecdotes of a light and cheerful character, and again when conversation flagged, renewing its interest by singing songs, either in English or Gaelic.*

In the places which he visited, his stay was necessarily short; sometimes a week, or, at most a fortnight, being all the time he could spend in a single settlement. But he made the most of his time, being employed night and day, with scarcely relaxation enough for sleep. He, of course, preached on the Sabbath day, and from the destitute condition in which he found the people as to the gospel, his preaching was generally upon the great central truths of the Christian system. To show this it is only necessary to refer to the general character of his texts. They were such as the following: "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord." "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth,

* There are here some repetitions of what has been stated in another connection, in the 9th chapter, but this could scarcely be avoided.

for I am God, and beside me there is none else." "Be ye reconciled to God," &c.

From the carelessness and indifference prevalent among the people, he found it necessary to labour, especially, to bring them to a sense of their guilt, and need of pardoning mercy. This he endeavoured to do, not by general declamation about human guilt and depravity, not by references to mankind at large, but by references to themselves, and the enumeration of particulars in their own conduct. He described in the plainest terms their evil passions, anger, wrath, envy, &c.; their evil speaking, lying, Sabbath breaking, drunkenness, &c., but from these rose to a higher exhibition of their sinfulness by pointing out their relation to God, and showing their alienation from his character, and total disregard of his claims. But this was only probing the wound, that he might apply the balm which is in Gilead. His exhibitions of man's sinfulness were only the dark ground, on which to exhibit in brighter colours the glories of Christ as a Saviour.

From the ignorance of the people too, he was led to seek the greatest simplicity of speech. His language was the very plainest; and where he was preaching a single sermon, not knowing whether his hearers would ever hear another, he aimed, not at preaching a systematic discourse, but in saying what was most impressive. For the purpose of rousing the careless he scrupled not to employ a strong epithet, even though to some it might give offence.

Doctor MacCulloch, in a little work called "William and Melville," thus describes him as he appeared on one of these excursions: "In the course of the evening the clergyman arrived. Few of the older Presbyterians of these Provinces are strangers to the apostolic enterprise and exertions of Doctor MacGregor. At a period when Nova Scotia presented to a clergyman only toil and privation, he resigned the endearments of the land of his fathers, and cast in his lot with the benighted and solitary inhabitants of the forest. Aroused to activity by the vigour of youth, and burning with desire to promote the

best interests of man, he traversed the pathless solitudes in every direction—not to collect the hire of the labourer from the people of the wood, but to share their hardships, and to soothe their sorrows by the tidings of salvation. Wherever a prospect of usefulness opened, he disregarded fatigue and outbraved danger, that the lost sheep of the desert might be restored to the fold. In one of these excursions of mercy he had now arrived at the cottage.

"In the opinion of Melville the appearance and manner of the clergyman were little calculated to produce an impression in his favour. With the homely garb of the country, he combined a plain simplicity of language which indicated neither literary nor scientific acquirements. In the course of the evening, however, Melville was agreeably disappointed, by discovering, under this unassuming exterior, an extent of information and good sense which he had not anticipated. The clergyman's capacities of directing the conversation particularly attracted his attention. Whatever topic was mentioned, he appeared constantly to keep in view that he was the minister of Christ, and by the well timed introduction of some striking and affectionate remark, he imperceptibly turned the thoughts of the company to the grand ends of human existence. Though Melville had no desire for religious instruction, he found it impossible to listen without being pleased.

"In the cottage, the succeeding day was a Sabbath to the Lord. Mercy and truth had met together; and there was joy in the wilderness and solitary place. The clergyman's discourse was rather a general exhibition of divine truth, than the regular discussion of a particular topic. He viewed his hearers as the servants of God, and the subjects of his law. Adverting to the precepts of religion as a transcript of Divine rectitude, he showed them the immutable nature of this standard of righteousness. Bringing them to its test, he subjoined an impressive exhibition of the great misery and utter helplessness of man; and then turned them to the Saviour as their sole relief. In simple but glowing language, he delineated the love

and grace of the Redeemer; and affectionately soliciting from them the submission of faith at the footstool of mercy, he pressed upon their minds the value of a religious life, and cheered them with the gospel, in its blessed consolations and glorious results.

"As the clergyman proceeded, the elevation of his feelings reached the hearts of his hearers; his sentiments, combined with the mellowed tones of his voice, were like showers that water the earth. It was a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord."

There was something very solemn in such work. He sometimes went to people, among whom would be found persons twenty years of age, who had never heard a sermon. He had only the opportunity of addressing them once or twice, and then a year or perhaps two or three must elapse before he could again visit them. Need we wonder that his whole soul was roused to the deepest earnestness of appeal, and that he sought, in the simplest language he could command, to explain the way of life, and that he besieged the throne of grace for their salvation?

There was also much that was pleasant. In every settlement there were persons, who remembered with interest the privileges they had enjoyed in the more favoured lands from which they had come, who "wept when they remembered Zion." To such his visits were green spots in their earthly pilgrimage, the remembrance of which they cherished as among the purest of their earthly joys. And to others, his preaching had all the attraction of novelty,—and drawn by curiosity, his impressive manner at once riveted attention, and they listened with eagerness to the marvellous story of the cross as something entirely new.

Where the people were sufficiently organized, he sometimes dispensed the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. On these occasions the ordinance was accompanied with all the services then usual in Scotland, and the scene presented was such as we have described as exhibited on similar occasions in Pictou. There

were the same "solemn assemblies" from Thursday till Monday, the same crowds gathering from surrounding settlements, the outward circumstances of meeting, under the blue vault of heaven, by the murmuring stream, or under the shadow of the green wood, were the same, but to all this was added the novelty of the scene. In many instances the young had never seen the ordinance dispensed, and wonder mingled with their other feelings as they instinctively enquired, "What mean ye by this service?" while to the old it was deeply affecting, as recalling similar scenes in their native land. Involuntarily their minds reverted to the stern mountains, or the peaceful valleys of Scotland or Ireland, in which they had spent their youth. Tender recollections crowded upon them of the lonely glen in the Highlands, the sunny dale of the Lowlands, or the green fields of Ulster, where they and their fathers had met to keep the feast, of the gathering of the various groups from mountain and glen, of the minister from whose lips they first heard the words of eternal truth, and of the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, which they had there enjoyed. Long had they been ready to say as David, "When we remember these things we pour out our souls in us, for we had gone with the multitude; we went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holy day." But now that God had visited them in a distant land, and these hallowed scenes were renewed to them in the wilderness, they wept for joy, and their feelings found expression in the language of David, when bringing the ark to Jerusalem: "Lo we heard of it at Ephrata; we found it in the fields of the wood. We will go into his tabernacles; we will worship at his footstool. Arise, O Lord, into thy rest; thou and the ark of thy strength. Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness, and let thy saints shout for joy."

We are not certain but the very spots selected for preaching added to the interest of these solemnities. In some places there were churches, but in others his preaching was in barns or private dwellings, but just as frequently in the open air,

sometimes on the hill side under the shelter of the forest, whose long shadows stretched across the multitude; or by some brook whose soft murmur mingled with the psalm of the worshipper, as if man and inanimate nature were combining their voices in one anthem to their Creator; or in the intervales, where the overhanging banks shaded them from the noonday sun. We have never preached in such circumstances, nor sat in an assembly of this kind, without feelings such as we never had in worshipping in any temples made by human hands. With him, too, such were more impressive from his drawing many of his illustrations, like the great Teacher, from the objects of nature around, and he reached the height of impressiveness as he closed his labours, by appealing to the rocks, the trees, the hills, or where within sight, to the burying ground, the green graves, as witnesses against his hearers in the day of judgment.

As he left his stand, not pulpit, for such a thing he commonly possessed not, it was only to enter upon an unceasing round of travelling, preaching, and religious conversation. Where the people had been originally Presbyterians, and retained the habits of their forefathers in Scotland or Ulster, one of the modes of instruction found most effectual, was by diets of examination. The whole inhabitants of a settlement would gather on such an occasion, and in the course of catechizing, opportunities were afforded to explain more particularly what was not clearly understood, and of taking a wider view of the system of divine truth.

From his narrative it will be seen that he was often called upon to administer the ordinance of Baptism, particularly to children, sometimes twenty or thirty being presented at one service. He however never dispensed it as mere form, but only after thoroughly examining the parents, carefully instructing them in the nature of the ordinance, and earnestly pressing upon them the important obligations resting on them. But he was often called to baptize adults, and his ministry afforded not a few examples of the apostolic practice of baptizing households. Thus we have heard of his baptizing the husband and wife and

seven children at the same time. And the following case recorded by himself, shows how the similarity of his circumstances with those of the apostles produced an example of "going down into [or to] the water." "Being once," he says, "on a missionary excursion, I agreed with several parents to baptize their children next day at public worship, but neither I nor they took thought to provide a vessel for the water. The preaching was in the open air, by the side of a brook, and when I desired the parents to present their children for baptism, there was no vessel. This, however, was no serious difficulty. Any one in the congregation might say, 'See here is water in the brook, what doth hinder the children to be baptized there?' As far as the brook was in view of the congregation, no part of it was deep enough for immersing the children and no part too shallow for sprinkling them. They were sprinkled."

Sometimes, also, he preached on week-days in settlements around, so that there were journeys on which he preached every day of the week. But his time on week-days was chiefly occupied in teaching from house to house. The advantage of this was that it gave him an opportunity of more direct dealing with individuals. He especially addressed himself to heads of families, because he was commonly asked to baptize their children, which he sometimes did to the number of seven or eight, and he wished to impress upon them a sense of their responsibility, and to lead them to the faithful discharge of the duties of family religion, not only for their own sake, but as the means which God commonly employs for the salvation of the young. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, *and thy house.*" And his discourse being conversational, an opportunity was afforded for them to state their perplexities, and for him to remove them.

In the houses in which he lodged, the neighbours would gather to listen to him, so that his conversation was often prolonged far into the night, while breakfast would not be over the next morning, till some would again be round him. And

as he travelled to another settlement, many parted from him with tears, while the young and the vigorous sometimes accompanied him either on foot or on horse-back, to the next place of labour, to listen to his conversation by the way,—or to hear his discourse there. So incessant were his labours that it was amazing how he could go through them with so little rest. But at any interruption he would fall asleep, and he had learned to sleep in any position, or in any circumstances, so that sometimes he was found sleeping on horse-back, while his horse leisurely pursued his journey—sometimes lying like his Master, in the hinder part of a boat, with the hard stones of the ballast for his couch, and the rail for his pillow, while again he would snatch a few minutes' repose on his chair, while those around him imagined him studying. Yet even with the slight refreshment obtained in such ways, he started up to resume his work with new vigour.

The effect of such a visit even for a few days, among a people in a condition so destitute, was much greater than at first sight would be supposed. It has been said that he *never* visited a place, on such a mission, where saving results did not follow. Believers, whose souls had long languished in the spiritual drought reigning around them, were refreshed, and the things that were ready to die were aroused into new life; souls not altogether regardless, but who had been, as it were, feeling after God, and with some degree of anxiety looking to their immortal interests, were guided in the way of peace, and were filled with joy in believing; while many careless were aroused to seek the Lord. On such occasions there was a real revival of religion—not what is often understood in America by that term—the getting up a mere animal excitement by means fitted to excite weak nerves,—but solemn impressions of *the truth* upon the mind, eager inquiries after the way of life, and personal acceptance of the Saviour. The number of individual cases of this kind resulting from his labours, the great day alone can disclose.

But the most known result was commonly the inducing an

anxiety to have the ordinances of the gospel regularly dispensed, and for that purpose, leading them to make efforts to obtain the services of a minister of the gospel. Where this was obtained within a reasonable time, the result was the formation of a congregation. He planted, and by visits for some years would water, and where a faithful labourer followed him, he reaped an abundant increase; but with his own sphere of labour requiring more of his attention, and new spheres claiming his sympathy, he was unable to build where he had laid the foundation; and when, as was too often the case, no faithful minister was obtained, the movement died out, or, at least it became the scene of the labours of other denominations. "Herein is that saying true, one soweth and another reapeth." "That both he that soweth, and he that reapeth may rejoice together."

In this work he came to take great delight. He saw the settlers every where as sheep scattered upon the mountains with none to care for their souls—he met among them the most cordial reception—every one who had any respect for religion, and others feeling their ignorance and their need of instruction, alike feeling the sentiments, if not adopting the language of the Prophet, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation!" He saw men listening with eagerness to the word of life, and saw that word having free course and glorified among them. This, his "joy therefore was fulfilled." And we believe that it had a good effect upon himself and his preaching. From early life he had been pious, and in his first preaching he preached the truth, preached it clearly, and with some degree of earnestness. But it was the sight of the destitute condition of the settlers, as "sheep wanting a shepherd," and perishing, with none to care for their souls, that stirred his spirit within him, kindled all the ardor of his nature, and filled him with consuming zeal for their salvation, and made his preaching of that earnest and rousing character, by which it was afterwards characterized.

In this way his labours extended over the then settled parts of

Eastern Nova Scotia, and of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. The most of the older Presbyterian congregations throughout this extent either originated with him or were cherished by him in their infancy. From the year 1788 till the year 1820, a period of over thirty years, scarce a year elapsed without one or more missionary journey, such as we have described, so that he might adopt the language of the apostle, which we have adopted, as descriptive of his life: "In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."

CHAPTER XII.

CONTINUED LABOURS AT HOME AND ABROAD.—1791–1793.

"In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." 2 Cor. xi. 27.

THE next missionary excursion of which he gives an account was a winter journey to Stewiacke. This settlement lies in a south-westerly direction from Pictou, and was about thirty miles distant from his home. The people there had not originally emigrated in one body. In the year 1780, a single settler named Kennedy from New England, erected his hut where John Putnam now resides. He was followed the next year by Mr. Samuel Teas, a North of Ireland Presbyterian, and Messrs. Whidden and D. Fisher from New England, who also settled in the Middle Settlement. In the following year Messrs. Wm. Fulton, Thomas Croker, Charles Cox, and Matthew Johnson, settled near where the village now is. Shortly after they were joined by others, some of whom settled in the Upper Settlement. At the time of Doctor MacGregor's first visit to them, there were about twenty families in the Upper Settlement, and about ten in the Middle. These were of mixed origin, some being from the North of Ireland, one or two from Scotland, but the majority from New England. They were generally well trained in religious matters. Previous to this, Mr. Cock of Truro, and Mr. Smith of Londonderry, paid them one or two visits. The Rev. James Munroe also preached among them

part of his time for about two years, between the years 1791 and 1794.

We insert here his own account of his journey, though the older settlers agree that his first journey did not take place so early as the date which he has assigned to it, (the first journey was in 1794,) and that his narrative confounds two journeys.

"1791. This winter I had to break in upon my plan of winter visitation and examination, by a few missionary excursions. To have given a little supply of sermon to Onslow and Stewiacke in summer would have been a sacrifice quite out of the power of the congregation, as one Sabbath in summer was worth two, or even three, in winter. I therefore determined, with the consent of the session, to give each of them two or three Sabbaths in winter. This, however, was no easy task when the snow was two or three feet deep. Here I had to travel forty miles on snow shoes, a journey almost three times as long as any which I had hitherto performed in that way. Travelling on snow shoes is eligible only when the snow is neither very soft nor very hard; for when it is very hard the snow shoes are apt to slide, and when it is very soft they sink deep, and become wet, and so heavy as to clog the feet greatly. It was soft then, and though I had three or four men before me making the road more solid, yet I was quite faint by the time we had travelled eleven miles. One of the company had with him a little rum and bread and cheese, of which we all partook, and by which I was recruited more than by any meal of victuals which I remember. But I became faint again before I reached a house, which was four miles distant. Then, having dined and rested, we travelled on to Truro, ten miles, where I had a sound sleep.

"In this short missionary excursion I had very attentive audiences, both on week-days and Sabbaths; but, as I could not but foresee, the proportion of females was much less than it would have been in summer. This was owing to the depth of the snow, and is unavoidable where the population is so thin that there is not enough of travelling to make good paths. On

my way home from Stewiacke I was more hardly bestead, both by fatigue and hunger, than ever I was. I left Stewiacke on a fine morning, along with four Pictou men—two belonging to the West River and two to the Middle River; and having scarcely twenty miles to travel, we doubted not of reaching Pictou before night. But we took a little bread and cheese with us, as we expected to be hungry before we could reach a house. We had travelled only a short way when the weather changed, and the travelling became extremely heavy. We therefore resolved, instead of going, one party for the West River and the other for the Middle River, to keep together, and steer a middle course between the two rivers until we could get far on, and so have less travelling after dividing. By this plan we would have but one path to break, and each one's share of the fatigue in going foremost to break it would be less. Thus we clung together till night, and then we judged ourselves only half way to Pictou. As it began to be dark, one began to cut down firewood, another to cut down poles and spruce branches for a shed or camp to shelter us, a third was engaged in fixing the poles and laying the branches in order over them, while the fourth laid the wood (cut by the first) in order upon the snow, collecting dry rotten sticks, striking fire, and kindling it. During most of the time in which they were thus engaged I rested, being much fatigued; but I soon grew very cold, and therefore got up and gathered a parcel of the spruce branches and strewed them on the snow for couches during the night. We soon made an excellent fire, and kept it burning all night, feeling no other inconvenience than that we had to turn now and then, for the side farthest from the fire soon grew cold, and the other too warm. I had no idea that a fire made on the top of the snow would have given us half the comfort we had; but my fellow-travellers were used to it, and well knew how to manage it with the greatest propriety. They laid on the snow a row of straight logs close together for a hearth, upon which they laid other logs and splits for the fire.

"With morning we rose to prepare for our journey. We

had good appetites, but no provisions. We separated—one party squinting to the left, with intention to hit the West River at a considerable distance down from its source; the other, to which I belonged, squinting to the right, with the same intention as to the Middle River. We, however, missed our mark completely, for we travelled on till we thought we must be far past the Middle River; and judging that we had passed it so near its source as to do so without knowing it, or perhaps wholly above its source, we altered our course, and struck to the left, assuring ourselves that we could not miss it again. Onwards we marched, till we again thought ourselves far past it; and not meeting it, we could not determine what was best to be done. After consultation, we resolved to turn again to the right. By this time I was extremely wearied, and glad of any excuse for resting two or three minutes. We had not gone far when we met a *blaze* (a chip taken off the side of the trees, to show travellers a course) crossing our path almost directly. We resolved to follow it, as it would lead us somewhere; but whether it was best to follow it to the right or left we could not determine. By mere random we chose the left, and followed it as we thought about three miles, but probably not two, when we began to fear it was leading us from home, and accordingly we came straight back upon our own track, and kept the direction for more than four miles as we thought, and then stopped for another consultation. I was glad of any excuse to stop a little. We now resolved to take a kind of random course till we should fall in with a brook, and then to follow it whithersoever it went. This we did, and soon fell in with a brook, which we followed a long way, shortening its windings as much as we could. It led us at length to burnt land, which gave us a hope that a settlement was not far off, though the immense multitude of fallen trees lying in every direction embarrassed us greatly, obliging us to creep under them and climb over them with great difficulty. The burnt land was extensive, and our progress through it extremely slow and fatiguing; but having got past, we soon arrived at a good

path on the side of the Middle River, about four miles below the upmost settler. Here we took off our snow shoes, and being relieved of their weight, I felt as if I had no feet, and yet was so done out, that I could scarcely reach the next house. Here we were speedily supplied with plenty to eat and drink; but I could eat nothing till after I had rested a while, when I felt an appetite for some boiled potatoes. Rest and sleep restored me to my usual appetite and strength."

The older settlers all agree that on his first journey he came through the woods direct from Pictou. Messrs. Samuel Teas and Robert Hamilton went for him, and Messrs. David Fraser and John Marshall went with him. Between the farthest up settler on the Middle River, (John Collie,) and the farthest up settler in the Stewiacke, a distance of nearly thirty miles, there was an unbroken forest, without even a *blaze* to guide the course of the traveller. They directed their course by compass, and of course had to travel on snow shoes. He spent two weeks on the excursion, preaching on Sabbaths and week-days in barns or dwelling houses, particularly at Mr. Robert Hamilton's, near where the village now is, at Mr. Wm. Fulton's just where the upper settlement meeting house now stands, and on the opposite side of the river. One sermon on the words, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," is particularly remembered.

They also agree that it was on the second journey he was reduced to such extremities, and that this was in the year 1795. On this occasion he came by way of Truro. At the Stewiacke side there was a blaze through the woods, but there was none at the Pictou side. His companions were John MacLean and Donald MacLeod, of West River, and Thomas Fraser and John Marshall, of the Middle River. On this occasion he preached in both settlements. This visit also extended to two weeks, during which he laboured both on Sabbaths and week-days, both preaching publicly and visiting from house to house. On both visits he held diets of examination. These meetings were at that time popular among the Scotch and Irish Presbyterians,

and there was, for the population, a large assemblage. In fact, the whole settlement gathered, and the house, which was a private dwelling, was full. The people were at that time somewhat divided as Burghers and Anti-Burghers, and on account of the controversy between him and the Truro brethren, a few did not go to hear him preach, but most were glad of a sermon, and both parties attended his diets of examination.

It may be added, that his companions on his journey home, who diverged for the West River, reached home without any mishap, though somewhat exhausted from want of food. He with the others came out at what was then Robert Brydone's, now occupied by Mr. W. P. Crockett.

"I got through the usual course of examinations with increased comfort, being satisfied that the congregation was growing in knowledge and grace; but I was obliged to omit the visitation of a number of families, especially those on the outskirts.

"This year the session and I had some trouble on account of an umbrage which some of the congregation entertained against Hugh Fraser, one of the elders. The offence was grounded almost wholly upon a misrepresentation, but so general was the offence taken, that his brethren in the session thought his public usefulness was over, and with much sympathy advised him to lay down his office. He, however, refused, until some real fault should be proved against him. None would undertake to do this, and so the matter rested, till the people came to view the case more coolly, to see through the misrepresentation, and to receive him into their favour again. He bore his trial with meekness and patience, recovered his usefulness, and retained it to his death.

"This year we had eighteen additional communicants, and among them Robert Gerrard, an Irish convert from Popery, who, during the two years, was alternately so pleased and displeased with my preaching, that he swore different times that nothing would prevent him from coming to hear me, and that he would never hear me more."

The following from his Memorabilia falls to be inserted here. "In October 1791, in sailing to the West River meeting house, I had a remarkable and most seasonable answer of prayer. The boat being heavy and ill manned we could make no headway after passing the Narrows ;* for then the wind was ahead and strong. But having got a lighter boat there, by making vigorous exertions, and keeping as much as we could under the lee, we got, by slow progress, to Fraser's Point between ten and eleven o'clock, A. M. But we could be no longer under a lee, and the wind was now more ahead, and stronger, and the men weary and discouraged, so that we hardly made any progress. During all this time I sometimes prayed and sometimes fretted. Here we were almost cast ashore. After struggling awhile, apparently to no purpose, I desired them to give it up, for that it was vain to attempt going forward, which they instantly did. But being vexed for the disappointment of God's people and the suffering of God's glory, I begged God's assistance, and desired the men to make another attempt, which they did; and as if a miracle had been wrought for us, we advanced fast, and landed in time to do the day's work."

"1792. Peter Grant, elder for the east branch of the East River, being dead for some time, and the bounds of the congregation being enlarged by the accession of new settlers, it was deemed necessary to add three more elders to the session. Merigomish also was enlarged in the same manner, and the people there wished to embrace the opportunity of getting an elder added to their session. Therefore, in the course of this summer, four more men were chosen, proved, and ordained to the office of the eldership.

"The session appointed me again to Amherst this summer. I found the people there much the same as before, only they were anxious about an answer to their petition for a minister. The reader cannot easily conceive my grief and perplexity on their account, seeing them from year to year destitute of public ordinances, and seeing my earnest applications to the Synod

* Of the East River.

producing nothing but sympathy. The Synod had, indeed, appointed Mr. Eneas MacBean, a preacher under their inspection, an acquaintance of mine, to whom I had written, earnestly requesting him to come, and who, answering plainly, promised that he would, if appointed, but did not stand to his promise. He found excuses for refusing the Synod's appointment; but he did not profit by it, for none who came had such a hard lot as he had. This example should be a caution to others. I wrote again to the Synod for ministers, a longer letter than before, and more earnest, which my friend, Mr. Buist, caused to be circulated pretty widely, in order to make a stronger impression at home. It had considerable effect; for though it produced no immediate relief, it induced Mr. Ross and Mr. Brown to prepare seriously for coming out.

"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick," and the disappointments which he experienced in regard to ministers coming to his assistance were among the most severe trials he experienced during the early years of his ministry. Two disappointments of this kind are mentioned in the preceding paragraph. They are more particularly described in the following letter, written about the beginning of the year 1791, to a relative who had emigrated to New York:

Dear Sir:—I received a letter dated October 9th,—this day. It is the fourth written to me, but I believe it is only the third which I received. I am sorry for Mr. Marshall's* losing the Meeting House, but I am not sure if it be a great loss to his congregation, because people will sympathize with them for having suffered unjustly, and they will be stirred up to pray more fervently. The silver and the gold are the Lord's, and he can easily employ them to build another Meeting House. The Lord's testimony will, without doubt, be maintained, and all attempts against it will only forward it.

It is a great pity that men are so unwilling to come to America. It is a means of hindering the Lord's work very much. But the hearts of all men are in the hands of the Lord, and when his time comes he will make them willing; but as he works by means, every one ought to use every means within his reach; and so those who have a call to come and refuse

* Rev. Mr. Marshall of Philadelphia, who lost his church by the union of the Associate and Reformed Presbyterians in the United States.

are certainly guilty of dreadful disobedience. Prayer is the chief means in our power, and as Christ gives us a special command to pray to the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers to his own harvest, I think you ought to make it a rule never to go to your knees in your family or in secret, without praying that he would send them forth,—you should also of this congregation and me.

We sent a petition to the Synod in May, '89, for Mr. MacBean, a Highlander, &c. The most part of the people are from the Highlands. Inverness had a call for him too, and as there was a competition, and the Synod were exactly in half for us, and in half against us, they did not make any decision that year, but sent word to us and Inverness to give a full account of our situation and needs, and the arguments we had in our behalf.*

We did so, and in May last he was appointed to this congregation without a dissenting voice, except one minister and one elder, but all this signifies nothing, as he is unwilling to come. If the Lord were not to overrule all things for good, it would be a great loss to us. There is no other who can preach Gaelic in the inspection of the Synod. How the Lord will dispose of us in this dispensation I know not, only I know he will do what is best.

Amherst, about 100 miles from this, sent a petition to the last Synod, and their petition is successful. John Cree, a son of John Cree, merchant in Perth, whom perhaps you know, comes out to them in Spring. This will be some help to us, as he will help us at the sacrament, which has been a heavy burden upon me. I have kept three sacraments alone, in Gaelic and English. I hope ere many years we will get some more ministers out here."

Mr. MacBean was a man of good talents, and his letters are full of loud professions of readiness to follow the path of duty wherever it might lead. "I am very much obliged," he says, "to you for your sincere, disinterested desire, that I should be your co-pastor in Pictou. In this most momentous matter I wish to be *equally disinterested*. I would not wish to imitate some of my fellow preachers, who refused going to America, when they had, in so far as I could ever yet judge, a very clear call to go. I would wish rather to consider myself as not at my own, but at the sovereign and gracious Lord's disposal; and consequently, as under the most indispensable obligation to answer and comply, whenever and whithersoever I should have a

* In a letter, Mr. Buist describes the competition between Inverness and Pictou, as "the most interesting that ever came before the Synod."

clear *call* from him." "You may do respecting me as you think best. I have no desire to have the least hand in carving my own lot."

With such promises on the part of his old friend we need not wonder that his expectations were high of having a fellow labourer, and that his disappointment was proportional, when, even after so clear a call as the almost unanimous voice of the Synod, Mr. MacBean refused to come to Pictou. He was settled in Inverness under the following circumstances, as stated by the Rev. P. Buchanan: "The congregation of Inverness is small, and the most of them very poor. They have however promised £20 of stipend, their greatest dependence for the payment of which is on occasional hearers and the future increase of the congregation. But Mr. MacBean is resolved to be content with whatever they shall be able to give." His life afterward was not a happy one. The congregation did not grow, but continued always small and poor, and to be able to live at all, he found it necessary to follow teaching or some other employment, and finally was involved in charges of immorality which brought him under the discipline of the church.

It is interesting to contrast the history of Dr. MacGregor and him. They were intimate friends,—both possessed of good talents, and both professed to have devoted themselves to the work of the ministry. But we see the one, when called to go far from the endearments of home, cheerfully complying, enduring some hardships and trials, it is true, but graciously sustained under them all—all his temporal wants supplied, and in old age surrounded by the comforts of life,—but especially blessed in spiritual things—the work of the Lord prospering in his hand, the wilderness and the solitary place becoming glad for him—living to see many congregations which he had been the means either of founding or of cherishing in their infancy—and in old age venerated through more than one Province, and dying amid wide-spread expressions of sorrow; the other refusing a similar call, and toiling in poverty—his labours blighted—and ending his days with his character under a cloud.

But his disappointment as to Mr. MacBean was followed by another of the same kind. At the same meeting of Synod at which he was appointed to Pictou, Mr. John Cree was appointed to Amherst, with liberty to return in three years if he pleased, and consented to go. Dr. MacGregor received intelligence of this, and his heart was filled with joy. For some months, as appears from the above letter, he continued in this expectation; but his hopes met with a most disheartening disappointment. The Presbytery of Glasgow, which had been appointed to meet *pro re nata* to receive his trials for ordination, had met and received part of them; "but," says Mr. Buist some days after, "I received a letter, saying, that his friends had persuaded him, that it was so bad a climate in Nova Scotia, that it rained half the year, and was so cold in winter, that he could not stand it, as in cold, damp weather his throat was like to close—that it was better to break his promise, than to go and be useless; in a word that he was determined not to go."

From the letter above, it will be seen that "patience had its perfect work," and that he became resigned to such disappointments. Mr. Buist says also, "I am glad that you have taken the disappointment so well as to Mr. MacBean." But, in his solitary position, and with so many places around him clamorous for the bread of life, these disappointments, particularly after the persons had solemnly promised to come, and for months he was in the expectation of their early arrival, were among the keenest of his earthly trials. In one of these years, so confidently did he expect one to come to his assistance, that he deferred the communion in expectation of his arrival. But at length when the time appointed was approaching, he received intelligence that he was not coming. Donald MacKay, his host, entering his room about the time, found him lying on the floor, apparently giving up in despair. "What's the matter with you now?" said Donald. He told him of his disappointment, and Donald began to cheer him. He arose, and in a little said, "I must go for assistance, where I have often gone before, and never have been disappointed yet." He accordingly set to work

at his preparation for the services, and went through them with great comfort to himself and satisfaction to the people.

The letter referred to, which he wrote in the year 1792, was printed by order of Synod, with notes by a committee, consisting of Revs. John Buist, Archibald Bruce, and James Robertson. It is the most impressive appeal of the kind we have ever read. We insert a copy of it among his Remains, as we are certain it will be read with interest. It was read from the pulpit in all the congregations belonging to the Synod, and was productive of good results. It was the means, not only of exciting an interest, through the church at home, in the state of Nova Scotia, but also, as we shall afterward hear, of bringing several ministers to Nova Scotia.

It is but just to remark, that the Synod made every effort to obtain preachers to come to his assistance—that they made appointments for those whom they thought suitable, and took every step, short of actual suspension, to induce them to come, but hitherto had always been unsuccessful. We find Mr. Buist's letters full of the subject, stating the various efforts made, and making inquiries as to the suitableness of this or that individual of his acquaintance. And we may remark that the Synod did not appoint persons who might be willing to go without regard to their qualifications. We find, for example, in 1794, a person volunteering to go, but his application delayed from doubts as to his suitableness.

"This year* arrived two vessels loaded with emigrants, almost all Roman Catholics, from the Western Islands of Scotland. It was so late in the season when they arrived, that few of them could provide houses for their families before winter. I entreated my people to be kind to them, and help them to the best accommodation they could, especially during the winter, God having given them a special opportunity of attending to the scriptural injunction, 'Be not forgetful to entertain strangers.' I was delighted with the readiness with which the congregation complied with my entreaty. Their benevolence far

* It should have been 1791.

exceeded my expectation, and afforded a beautiful evidence of the power of divine truth, and the amiable spirit of Christianity; and to this day these Roman Catholics retain a grateful sense of the kindness they then experienced. Several hundreds of them, of all ages, found the best shelter that could be obtained till they could provide for themselves. Such as could pay, had it at a very moderate price; and those who could not, had it gratis.

"Many of them came to hear sermon for a time, and there was a fair prospect that numbers of them would become Protestant Presbyterians; but priest MacEachran, in Prince Edward Island, hearing of their critical situation, paid them a visit, told them of the danger of living among Protestants, advised them to leave Pictou, to go eastward along the Gulf Shore to Cape Breton, where Protestants would not trouble them, and threatened them with excommunication if they would come to hear my preaching. A good number of them obeyed him instantly, and the rest by degrees, except a very few who embraced my gospel. In general they left off hearing, and quitted their settlements in Pictou—and not a few of them with much reluctance.

"But they were more dangerous guests in the congregation than I was aware of; not from the strength of their arguments for Popish doctrines, but from the powerful influence of their profane conversation. Much of their time was spent in naughty diversions, jestings which are not convenient or decent, in telling extravagant stories of miracles done by priests, and absurd tales about ghosts, witches, fairies, &c. The minds of the Protestant Highlanders, being partly tinctured with these superstitions before the arrival of the Roman Catholics, were less prepared to resist their influence than the minds of more reasoning and sceptical Christians. They had been pretty much weaned from the remains which the first settlers brought from Scotland, but this new flood overwhelmed them. They proved so agreeable to the fancy of simple and untutored minds as to turn many to fables, and in some degree to injure those who

did not believe them. To this day we have not got wholly over these bad lessons. What poor Christians must the Catholics be, who have these things for their Bible! What miserable teachers are the priests, who prohibit the use of the Scriptures, and teach pure fables!"

The descendants of these people, with numerous other emigrants of the same class, are still very numerous in the eastern parts of the Province, and also in Prince Edward Island. He showed them great kindness. As they were all newly beginning in the woods, a gift which he gave to numbers of them was an axe and a hoe. They came to regard him with great veneration, supposing him to possess the powers which they attributed to their own priests, and giving him honour accordingly. Two amusing anecdotes of this may be given. It was a superstition of the Highlanders, that if an animal went astray *a good man* could tell where it was. One of these, having lost a horse, came to the Doctor to seek his assistance to find it. It had so happened that the day previous being Sabbath, the Doctor, on his way from preaching at the Upper Settlement, had seen a horse by the way-side, and horses being then rare, his attention was arrested by it. On the man's coming to him he recollected the circumstance, but began to reason with him on the folly of supposing that he should be able to discover his horse. The man was going away in despair, and still believing that it was from want of will rather than want of power, that he did not tell where the horse was; when the Doctor said, "Well, don't despond. I saw a horse at such a place, and perhaps he is yours." The man went to the place indicated, and found the horse, and, ever after believed that it was by the Spirit of God that the Doctor had discovered where it was.

On another occasion, a woman had a cow under some complaint. She was convinced that he could cure it, if he chose, and he happening to be at her place, she pressed him to go to see the cow. He told her that he could do nothing for her. She, however, insisted; urging him only to lay his hand upon her. As she would take no denial, he, at length went, and lay-

ing a rod which he had in his hand upon her back, he said, "If you live you live, and if you die you die." The cow recovered. Some time after, the Doctor himself had a sore throat, and this old woman came to see him. As soon as she entered the room, she said, "Ah, if you live you live, and if you die you die." He immediately recollected the circumstance, and he burst out laughing, which broke the abscess that had been forming, which discharged, and he soon got better. Their gratitude for the kindness they experienced from him was great, and to this day there is retained among them a deep veneration for his memory.

As the superstitions of the Highlanders are here referred to, we may mention that, throughout his whole ministerial career, he had more or less of this to contend with, both in public and private. On one of his papers we find the following memorandum, as if of subjects on which he meant to address them :—

"Thursday marriages—and going that night to the brides,—afraid of dogs,—bride-cake.

Prejudice against inoculation.

Christmas holiday.

Witches taking the milk from the cows.

Wonderful stories of ghosts, fairies, and

Miracles and prophecies.

Cannot go to sermon in time of proclamation, and before baptism of child."

These and similar points, he was often called upon to discuss, both publicly and privately. Some of them disturbed the peace of the church. The witch controversy, especially, as we shall see, excited much attention. In the meantime we may give one or two incidents, which severely tried his own faith in the doctrines which he was so often called upon to maintain, regarding ghosts. On one occasion, returning home late at night, in fact, near that hour, "of nicht's black arch the keystane," which, according to all authorities in such matters, is specially favoured by ghosts and witches, he saw, by the light of the moon, a figure in white standing apparently in mid air ahead of him, close

by the road. His horse was startled, and so was he for a little himself, but he immediately saw that it would never answer for him to draw back or to show fear. He accordingly went up to it and found that it was a poor, insane woman, living close by, who had left her bed at that time of night, and wrapping the sheet round her, had taken that position on a stump. At another time a report had arisen that at a certain place on the East River, *something* had been seen. Several individuals reported so, but no precise account of its nature or appearance could be given, for, in fact none had courage to examine. One night, the Doctor riding home past this place, also saw *something*. It appeared bright, and shining under the rays of the moon. He rode up to it without discovering what it was, till he came close to it, and gave it a tap with his rod, when he found it to be a very large hornets' nest. On another occasion, going along the road at night, he saw something white on the road, and on going toward it, it moved from him. He pursued it, but still it seemed determined to avoid him. At length, after a vigorous chase he caught it, and found it to be a sheet, or some white article of apparel, driven by the wind. This last incident Mr. Ross used to make the subject of many a joke.

His labours for the spiritual good of these people were not in vain, as appears from the remaining part of his account of them.

"Four of these Catholics became converts—one of whom deserves more particular notice than the rest. She was a smart woman, but a complete bigot to Popery, and her husband was a Protestant. They had agreed very well in Scotland, because the principal difference in their religious profession was in name; but when they came to Pictou, he became seriously concerned about his soul; and among other changes which took place in his conduct, was the setting up of the worship of God in his family, morning and evening. This she could not bear, and thought it her duty, as she could not prevent it, to disturb it as much as she could. He resented this; and the consequence was, that she left his house. He was vexed, and came to ask

my advice. I advised him to go after her, to speak kindly to her, to invite her home in the most affectionate manner, to promise that he would never disturb her devotion, and to demand that she should not disturb his, either in the family or the closet. He took the advice, and brought her home. Soon after she brought him a child; and happening to meet him a day or two after, he said he was in some difficulty about the baptism of the child, as there was no woman near to suckle it, and she would not carry it to the meeting-house herself, as she would not hear me preach. Having occasion, in two or three days' time, to be near his house, I proposed to preach a sermon at his house then, and baptize the child, when she would be obliged to hear, because she could not run off. This proposal pleased him. He advertised his neighbours, and, on the day appointed, I went. On entering the house I found a number of the neighbours collected, and saw her lying in a corner. She met my eyes with a most piercing and disdainful look. I asked her how she did. She replied, 'As well as I could expect.' I said, 'You ought to be very thankful, then.' She said, 'Yes.' I soon began public worship by singing and prayer, and could not help looking towards her before reading out the text. I noticed that her looks were changed to mildness, and took courage. The text was Acts xvi. 31: 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' I endeavoured to show our need of salvation, that Christ bestows it freely, and that believing in him is the means of possessing it. She appeared to drink in every word with eagerness. She never showed the least desire, after that day, to see the priest: and she has ever since maintained the character of a pious, prudent, and zealous Christian.*

* This woman was a Mrs. Angus MacQuarrie, who lived on the east branch of the East River, near where the Rev. A. MacGillivray now resides. When her husband first came to Dr. MacGregor, the language he used in exhorting him to patience and kindness with her was, "We must not send a rattle after a wild horse." She was a very intelligent woman, and lived the life of a consistent Christian. Her mother-in-law also became a convert. They were both very well informed regarding the errors of popery, and very determined against them.

We shall conclude this chapter with an account of an interesting journey of which he takes no notice, performed as nearly as we can ascertain in the winter of 1793, viz., to River John, Tatamagouche, and Wallace. These places are situated on the North Shore of the Province, at distances respectively of eighteen, thirty-two, and fifty miles from Pictou to the Westward.

The settlers in River John, and most of those in Tatamagouche, were Protestants from the continent of Europe. One or two families were the descendants of French Huguenots, who had left their native land at the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The others were Swiss.

On their first settlement in Tatamagouche, they endured great hardships, having often to carry potatoes on their backs from Truro, a distance of thirty miles, and having frequently to resort to some plants growing on the marsh, which when boiled made a palatable sort of greens. At the time of his first visiting them, the New Lights had come among them and had got the people into a state of the wildest excitement, when John Langill and George Patriquin, of River John, afterward elders in the congregation there, started on snow shoes to endeavour to induce Doctor MacGregor to visit them. The Doctor at once set out with them. Between Pictou and River John was an unbroken forest. There was not even a blaze, neither was there a single settler on the shore between the two places. They started from about where the Three Mile House now stands, of course on snow shoes, and directing their course by means of a pocket compass, they came out at Man of War Point as it is called, about a mile up the river from where the village now stands. There were then only six families in the settlement of the class already described, who had removed from Tatamagouche in consequence of Col. DesBarres refusing to sell his lands. He preached in a private house, visited them all, and baptized a number of children. He quieted the minds of the people and entirely stopped the progress of the New Lights.

He next proceeded to Tatamagouche. Between the two

places there was neither path nor blaze, the usual way of travelling being either by water or walking along shore. This place, however, had originally been settled by the French, who had made considerable progress. A considerable extent of land on the shores of the Bay and Harbour, from below the church to MacCulley's had been cleared by them, and the furrows were still visible. The intervale both on Waugh's River and French River had also been cultivated by them, and on the former they had commenced the smelting of copper. They had, however, abandoned the country after the peace of 1763. There were, however, still to be seen the remains of their grist mills. Traces also of a grave yard, with the cross still standing at the head of the graves, and of a Romish chapel, were to be seen between what is now Mr. Wm. Campbell's field and the school-house. There were then but fourteen families in the settlement. Of these three were Scotch, and the rest of the class already described, all Protestants, the latter Lutherans and the former Presbyterians. They were not careless about religious matters, as they were in the habit of meeting on the Sabbath day and having prayers read. They had secured the services of a Mr. Kelley, as a teacher to their families, an intelligent, amiable, and industrious man, to whom they all became much attached, and through whom they obtained instruction in the elementary branches of education. Only a few of the old people could not read or speak English. This Kelley, however, set out for Truro, but never returned. Afterwards his body was found near a pond where he had perished of cold and hunger, after having erected a slight shelter and made a fire. His loss proved a great injury to the moral and religious improvement of the people. There were no roads beyond the immediate bounds of the settlement, and even, within these bounds, they were scarcely passable at certain seasons of the year.

The weather was very stormy during his visit, so that he did not travel much. He lodged at the house of Mr. Wellwood Waugh, on Waugh's River, and persons wishing baptism came there to converse with him before Sabbath. On that day he

preached at the house of a Mr. James Bigney, which stood in what is now Mr. William Campbell's field near the Bank. A number came from Wallace and other places adjacent, and so large was the assembly, or so small the building, that when parents held up children to be baptized, they had to go into the open air to find standing room.

On the following day he proceeded to Wallace, then called Ramsheg, where he went through similar services. The number of families there was about twenty, mostly loyalists from New York. He then returned home, having spent altogether between three and four weeks on the mission.

We may mention that two years after he undertook a similar mission, but this time it was in summer, and he went along the shore to River John. But we have gleaned no particular information regarding it. About eighteen years later, a large immigration of Highlanders took place, who settled on the opposite side of Wallace Bay, whom he and the other members of the Presbytery visited occasionally.

CHAPTER XIII.

CONTINUED LABOURS AT HOME AND ABROAD.—1793–1795.

"Be not weary in well doing, for in due season ye shall reap, if ye faint not."
Gal. vi. 9.

As the life and labours of Doctor MacGregor are closely connected with the social progress of Pictou, we may here notice an important change, which took place about this time, viz., the introduction of law. Hitherto the settlers might be considered as one family. Squire Patterson had managed almost all their secular affairs. Indeed until the arrival of Doctor MacGregor he performed the ceremony of marriage, after notice had been duly posted up in several parts of the county. With him was associated, as possessing a kindred influence, John Patterson, commonly known as Deacon Patterson, and after his death as the old Deacon, from his son being also an elder of the church. "For many years after his arrival here, there was neither law nor lawyers. In those happy times men took the scriptural mode of settling disputes. They were not afraid to leave the adjustment of 'things that pertain to this life,' to their conscientious neighbours. These two old Patriarchs, the squire and the deacon, famed as they were for integrity and sound sense, became the general peacemakers. None dared or wished to gainsay their decisions. Generally when two men in any place are upon an equality, the disposition to be first, so universally distributed among men, creates feuds between them,

and the public good is left in the back ground, and the public peace disturbed. The two good men of whom we are speaking formed an honourable exception from that common occurrence. They lived together not merely on good terms, but a pattern of warm and inflexible friendship."*

But, during the few years that had elapsed since Doctor MacGregor's arrival, the population had considerably increased. A number of pious Highland families were attracted hither from other parts of the Province by his preaching, and a considerable emigration of Highlanders, both Protestant and Catholic, took place about the years 1791 and 1792. This rapid increase of population now caused those halcyon days to cease, and in 1792, an order was issued by Government for holding an inferior court in this town. This was followed by the erection of a jail in the year 1794. It stood where the house of James D. B. Fraser, Esq., now stands, and was built by the late John Patterson. We have his account for it in our possession, from which it appears that the amount levied for its erection, was paid principally in produce; wheat and maple sugar being the chief articles of exchange. Another change also may be noticed. Previously each settler had acted in a great measure as artizan for his own family, but such an increase led to mechanics devoting their time to their several employments, and thus introduced more of that division of labour, characteristic of a more advanced state of society.

Turning to the congregation, we may insert here a brief memorandum, which we have found in his own hand writing, written on his return from his visit to River John, described in the last chapter. "Communicants, 240; Examinables, 500." "Ramshak, 20 families; Tatamagouche, 14; River Jones, 6; Merigomish, 30." Below is also the following, the figures on which we presume denote families. "Harbour, 40; West River, 30; Middle River, 18; East River, 90." Total, 178.

This memorandum is written on the back of a letter from the Rev. Andrew Brown, of Halifax, mentioning "the sending out

* Col. Patriot, v. 1.

of a large supply of Bibles, Testaments, and pious tracts, by the Trustees of a collection made some years ago for the benefit of the Dissenting interest, to be distributed among the most indigent, and of these among the best disposed in their congregations," and offering a supply to the Doctor for the benefit of his congregation. The same letter solicits, for the information of the Trustees, a statement of the extent of the district, the number of families in it, the number of communicants, examinables, &c.

These books and tracts we need not say were gladly received and extensively circulated. We may here notice an act of benevolence of a similar kind toward his congregation, which, as taking place previous to the formation of either Bible or Tract Societies, is worthy of record. We shall give it in the words of Mr. Buist as contained in a letter of date 19th March 1793.

"I also send you a large box, a present from David Dale, Esq., Glasgow, of 60 Bibles, 60 Spelling Books, 60 Primers, for you to give to the poor Highlanders, and he desires me to say to you, he will send you more if the Lord spare him, and enable him to do it, and you think it will spread the glorious gospel of the grace of God. These are his words. I think you should write him a letter of thanks. I will convey it to him. I know they cost him £12, and are worth three times that with you. I have got them freight free and free of custom house. His goodness is uncommon in this age of the world. He is delighted, I gave him a hint to do good."

It may not be going too far out of our way to notice that this individual was long well known in Glasgow, especially for his large hearted benevolence. He entered Glasgow with sixpence in his pocket, and died worth £180,000. He used to say that he gave away in gowpies or handfulls, but that God gave him back in shovelfulls. He was commonly known by the name of "Peasemeal David," from the circumstance that in a year of great scarcity during the last war, he imported from Holland a cargo of pease, which he got ground, and sold to the poor at cost and charges, or gave gratuitously to the very necessitous.

Resuming Dr. MacGregor's narrative, it opens for this year

with a short account of an incident in his congregation which for a time agitated the minds of the people and gave him considerable uneasiness.

"1793. Robert Marshall and Donald MacKay, two of the elders, and perhaps the two foremost Christians in Pictou, being overreached by the craft of an insidious enemy to the gospel, were prevailed upon to subscribe a paper injurious to the character of one of their neighbours. The deed gave general offence, and as soon as they themselves saw its import, they were exceedingly sorry. When the session dealt with them, they proposed, themselves, as the best method of undoing the evil, to accept of a public rebuke. With reluctance the session yielded, and it was done—only it could not, with propriety, be called rebuke. I stated to the congregation, as fairly as I could, both the fact and the state of the two elders' minds concerning it, and exhorted them to watch against the craft of the enemy. I exhorted the congregation highly to esteem the elders, and to profit by that example of submissive and cheerful acknowledgment of their fault which they had given. The feelings of all were excited in a very lively and affectionate manner, and the design of the enemy was completely frustrated. Besides, we had an opportunity of admiring the wisdom and propriety of Paul's direction to Timothy, 'Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father.'"

As to labours abroad we find that this summer he had a petition to visit Halifax, addressed to him by a committee of a congregation recently become vacant. They represent themselves as having been under the pastoral care of the Rev. Mr. Furmage, who had been removed by death—that they held the doctrines of the gospel—that Arminianism prevailed around them, and that they desired him to visit them, and advise with them especially as to obtaining a minister, and that, should he do so, they will pay his expenses. What advice he gave them we know not, but it does not appear that he visited them. He had preached in Halifax at the time of William MacKay's lawsuit, and on some other occasions afterward. But for this

summer he sets down his first visit to portions of the county of Hants, which have since become a flourishing part of the church.

"Petitions were sent to the session from Chiganois, Shubenacadie, Noel, and Kennetcook. I was appointed to give a Sabbath to each. I had preached before at Chiganois; the rest were new places, situated on the other side of the bay. A copy of my printed letter to the Synod had, somehow, found its way to them, and it excited them to apply to me for two or three Sabbaths' labour among them, and to resolve upon applying to the Synod for a minister, if I should not discourage them. I preached at the several settlements, and on week-days conversed with them on the subject of applying for a minister. I told them that no minister had come in answer to four applications already made. They replied that they were not ready for the reception of a minister, and as he would not probably arrive for some years, it was best to make the application now, that they might be making ready for his coming, and that the Synod might know to be providing for them. I said, farther, that I was afraid that, on account of the extent of their settlements, and the thinness of their population, and want of roads, &c., the fatigue of serving them would be too much for any one minister. They replied that a very little service from a minister might do them much good, and they would be content with what he could do; and that, on their part, they would accommodate him as far as in them lay, to lessen his fatigue. Thus I agreed to write the petition for them, and send it to the Synod.

"In returning home, both myself and my horse were in imminent danger of death, in crossing Salmon River bridge, fifteen miles from the West River of Pictou. The bridge was formed in the following manner:—Over an upright pier, on each side of the river, were laid three long logs, at least forty-five feet long, so as to extend fifteen feet beyond the pier on the river; the other end extending thirty feet on the land, and having heavy logs laid across them near the end, to overbalance

any weight that might be on the bridge. The long logs are called butments. Three other logs were laid with their ends resting on the inner ends of the butments, fifteen feet from the piers, filling the interval space. The round of the upper surface of the log was hewn away by the axe, and thus the bridge was finished with nine long logs. Spans of ninety or one hundred feet are made in this way.

"Riding along this bridge, my horse's right hind foot went down between the logs (their outside being rotten), and he could not pull it out, because he always pulled it aslant forward, and not straight up as he put it down. He tossed and struggled fearfully to get it out, but in vain; and as the bridge was narrow, he was often within an inch of tossing both himself and me over. I made many attempts to get off him, but could not, for I had no way to come off but to alight upon one side while he tossed to the other, but before I could do this he still tossed back, so that I had to keep my seat till he fatigued himself into calmness. When I got off him, I tried with all my might to push him back, that he might pull his leg straight up, but in vain. After resting a little, he began again to toss and struggle, so that I was oftentimes within an inch of being thrown over. I was in absolute need of help, but travellers seldom passed, and I might long wait in vain for assistance. There was a house about a quarter of a mile down the river from the bridge, and another a little further off up the river, and I shouted with all my might, hoping that somebody would hear me, but in vain. I resolved, however, not to abandon the poor animal. I waited long, and at last, to my great joy, saw a person passing very slowly from the house above to that below. I told him my distress, and begged him to run as fast as he could to the house below, and send me somebody. He went away so slowly that I made myself sure that he rejoiced at my calamity, and I was sufficiently angry and grieved. The horse, wearied out with struggling, at last lay down quietly on the bridge, and if I had had patience, my work in attending him would not have been difficult. After long waiting, I at last saw a woman coming in all haste with

an axe in her hand. As the horse was quiet, I took time to bid her not be alarmed, and to ask her if there was nobody to send but herself, and what that wonderfully slow man was who informed her of my situation. She said that none of the men were at home; and as for that poor man, 'he did his best; he is dying fast, and can scarcely drag one foot after the other.' I was now more angry at myself than I was before at him, for I had left no possible place of excuse for him.

"I gave the bridle to the woman, desiring her, if the horse should struggle, to hold him as firmly as she could, only to let him go over rather than herself. I took the axe and went to cut the hole wider, to let up the foot. This required caution, for as the horse lay down upon the bridge, he let down his thigh through the hole as far as it could go, so that I was in danger of cutting his thigh every stroke. By care I widened the hole without hurting the horse's leg, pulled it up gently, and laid it across the hole under him. I then went and got a broad thin stone, and laid it over the hole, lest he should put his foot in it again, when he should get up. I took the bridle from the woman and bade him get up, which he did as if nothing had happened. Thus a kind Providence brought about my deliverance wonderfully.

"Two or three years afterwards, a better bridge was built here. The logs were properly squared, and a rail was put on both sides for the protection of passengers. On this bridge I was in as great danger, and had as remarkable a deliverance, but both very sudden. Going along one morning when the smoothed surface of the log was covered with hoar-frost, and the shoes of my horse were worn smooth, his right hind foot slid away, so that he fell against the rail and broke it; but the rail also broke his fall, so that he recovered himself. When I heard the rail cracking, I thought we were over for certain, and perhaps killed. What a happy disappointment, that next moment I found we were both safe! 'The Lord is thy keeper.'

"Upon another occasion both my horse and I actually fell

over a bridge into the water, but sustained no other damage than being alarmed and thoroughly wetted. It was a very rainy day, the timber of the bridge was very slippery, and the horse's shoes smooth. He seemed to me to lose all his feet at once, for in a moment he played plash in the water upon his side. The bridge was not high, and the water pretty deep, so that in our fall we struck the water only, and were not hurt. I endeavoured instantly to disentangle my feet from the stirrups, lest the horse in saving himself should draw me after him, and either drown me or break my bones against logs or stones. I succeeded, and we both got to our feet soon, for the water was not deep enough to swim him. We made for the shore, he with ease, I with difficulty, as my clothes became a heavy burden, and the stream was pretty strong. I mounted and rode off, thankful for God's goodness."

This last we believe took place at the Middle River, and it was remarked, that when he came home he quietly changed his clothes, as if nothing unusual had happened. But these were not the only occasions in which he was exposed to inconvenience, and even actual danger in crossing the streams, which every where traverse this country. On one occasion, coming over to the West River to preach, in descending Green Hill, back of the residence of George MacDonald, Esq., (such was then the course of the road,) a freshet had floated away the covering logs of the bridge across the brook. He passed along without observing this, and soon he and his horse plunged into the stream. He got thoroughly wet, and came to the house of Mr. MacLellan, who lived close by. They could give him a pair of striped trousers for a change, but they had not a black pair. So he dried his clothes a little by the fire, and then preached.

In his "Memorabilia" we find the two following entries:—

"In October, 1792, the Lord wrought a most kind and wonderful deliverance for me."

"In December, 1793, the Lord wrought a very kind and signal deliverance for me, by which I was freed out of as great a strait as ever I was in.

We are not certain what these were; but the following was related by himself as a deliverance from the greatest difficulty he had ever been in, and it was probably one of them, and from the season of the year most likely the last of them. One Sabbath morning, in the month of December, he was proceeding to the West River to preach. In crossing MacCulloch's Brook,—so called, the bridge being constructed like the one over Salmon River, above described, the horse put his foot between the logs, and making a sudden jerk to extricate himself, threw himself and his rider over the bridge into the brook. They fell amid water and mire, the horse on his side, and with one of the Doctor's feet under him. The horse was in such a position, that, though he struggled a good deal, he could not rise; and the Doctor was utterly unable to extricate his leg from beneath the animal. He strove in vain for some time to relieve himself, until he began to despair. He thought, that unless some person should happen to pass that way, of which there was little likelihood, he must lie in that position till he died. In this emergency he resorted to his never-failing resource, prayer. He accordingly offered up a short supplication to his heavenly Father for deliverance. When he had concluded, turning his thoughts again to consider the means of escape, he thought that he would make one more effort to extricate himself. He accordingly drew up the leg that was at liberty, and placed the foot against the horse's body, so as to be able to press against him with all his force. When the horse next struggled, he accordingly pushed against him with the one foot, and endeavoured at the same time to drag the other out, and after a little effort succeeded. When he was free, himself, he succeeded in getting up the horse; and mounting him, he proceeded to the West River, a distance of about eight miles, and by the time he arrived at the house of Mr. Robert Stewart, where he was to preach, his clothes were frozen on him. He warmed himself at the fire, and without changing his clothes preached two sermons.

Such exposure was fitted to destroy any constitution, and we need not wonder that his strength began to give way. Much

of the hardship he endured was unavoidable, but we fear that at this time he had not learned sufficiently the duty of using all the means in his power for the preservation of his health. In after years he was careful in attending to this duty himself, and urging it upon others, as the following incident will show. On one occasion assisting Mr. Brown at a sacrament, the latter, who was usually punctual, having been detained, was obliged to hurry, and when he came to the church was over-heated. The church was so crowded that when he entered it, he felt a perfect steam issuing from the door. He went up to the pulpit and preached with energy, so that between the exertion he had previously made, the state of the church, and his energy in preaching, the perspiration was actually dropping from his clothes before he was done. When the service was over, the Doctor said to him in his own impressive way, "Mr. Brown, you've been serving the Devil to-day." "What do you mean?" "Why, just that you have been doing Satan's work." "How so?" "Do you not know that it is the wish of Satan to cut short the lives of God's ministers, and that is just what you have been doing." But, in the early years of his ministry, being young and vigorous, he seems not always to have exercised the precautions which he might have done. In his old age he used to blame the hardships and exposure of these years, most of which were unavoidable, as the cause of the premature breaking down of his frame.

At all events, to his other difficulties was now added failing health. For some time, particularly during this summer (1793), the state of his health was such as to alarm both himself and his friends. Continued spitting of blood, with weakness and other symptoms, produced an impression that he was going into a decline. The Rev. Samuel Gilfillan, writing under date 22nd April, 1795, says: "Your father and I received your letters, dated at Pictou, December 8th and 9th, 1794, about the beginning of March last, and we were very glad to hear from you. Your father was wearying very much to hear from you, and was very anxious about your health, as your letters of 1793 seemed

to insinuate that you were not in a good way on account of a consumption. But we were all happily disappointed in our fears, when you informed us that your health was re-established, and that you had been enabled to go through so much of your Master's work in visiting St. John's Island," &c. And the Rev. A. Pringle, writing about the same time, says, "It grieved me to the heart to hear that your health was but in an indifferent state."

We have no record of his feelings by himself, but persons still living recollect, that he was often in considerable sadness, especially in view of the prospects of the congregation. He had already seen the fruit of his labours in a population trained in industry and morality, and a congregation gathered requiring the services of two ministers. He had planted the gospel in other places around, and saw them earnestly stretching out their hands, with the importunate cry, "Come over and help us." Yet his most earnest petitions for brethren to come to his assistance, repeated during seven weary years, had proved fruitless, and he saw little hope of any better success for future applications. In view then of his removal, he saw nothing before his flock, but to be scattered as sheep wanting a shepherd, and the work on which he had spent so much toil, and which now promised so well, interrupted, if not entirely arrested, and Zion again becoming a desolation. Doubtless he did not lose his faith in the wisdom of the Great Head of the Church, and his ability to supply them; but the failure of all past attempts was sufficiently trying to his faith, and discouraging to his hope, and we need not wonder that he was dispirited. But though "cast down he was not destroyed," and still he toiled on, though sometimes ready to give up, both from weakness of body and fainting of spirit. His good friend Donald was ever ready to encourage him. One day the Doctor said to him that he believed he would have to give up. "No, no," said Donald, "hold on while you can, and give up when you must."

The sympathies of the people were drawn out strongly toward him. Indeed it was only then, that he saw the hold

which his work had taken upon the minds of the community, and the place which personally he had gained in the hearts of the whole population. Then only they became conscious of the depth of their feelings toward him. This was evinced in a very lively manner on one occasion at the Loch Broom church. During the time of preaching a faintness came over him. He laid down the Bible on a table before him, and requested the people to sing a part of the sixty-second Psalm,

> "My soul with expectation
> Depends on God indeed, &c."

and went out into the open air. The congregation was deeply agitated, as my informant said, many, whom no one would have thought, shedding tears. He went to the brook near by, and took a drink of water, and in a little feeling better, he returned and resumed his discourse as usual.

He of course used all means for his recovery, and among them all the compounds that the skill of female herbists deemed suitable; and through the kindness of Providence, by the next season his health was re-established, and continued good till near the close of his life.

Advancing to the next year we find the following among his Memorabilia:

"In June 1794, at the time of the Sacrament, the Lord granted me a happy confluence of favours.

"1. He removed a trial which had been productive of much grief and sin, and from which I got the deliverance mentioned in the preceding paragraph.*

"2. Being apprehensive of the want of wine for the Sacrament, there being none nearer than Halifax, I met Robert Marshall arrived with it, just as I was ready to begin the public work of the fast day.

"3. I received letters giving an account of the Synod's appointing three ministers to Nova Scotia.

* We presume that this refers to the matter of Robert Marshall and Donald MacKay.

"4. There came a greater number of strangers to the Sacrament, than at any time hitherto.

"5. There was no observable disturbance of public worship by sickness, fainting, or any thing, as happened for several years before.

"6. The whole work was conducted as agreeably and comfortably as ever. Much outward and I trust inward (comfort) was graciously granted."

This summer as usual his attention was occupied with missionary labour as will be seen by his narrative.

"1794. This year petitions for sermon were presented before the session from St. John's Island, Cape Breton, Amherst, and Londonderry. Mr. Smith, minister of Londonderry, was unable to labour. His congregation took little interest in the controversy about the burgess oath, otherwise they would not have applied to me for preaching. The session was at a loss how to do with so many petitions, and I was grieved for want of help from the Synod. Thinking Cape Breton and St. John's Island the most needful, they appointed me two Sabbaths to Cape Breton, and four to St. John's or Prince Edward Island. I could get no opportunity of a passage to Cape Breton, I therefore went to Prince Edward Island. I found St. Peter's and Cove Head much in the same state in which I had left them. I was chiefly anxious about the people of Princetown, as I had enlisted them without much opportunity of knowing the Redeemer's standard, and was afraid that many had deserted. What accounts I had heard were favourable, but I did not know if they were true.

"When I had reached within about sixteen miles of Princetown I met a man who, after salutations, told me that he was in such distress about his sins that he could not have patience till I reached the settlement, but had come off to me as soon as he heard that I had come to the island, in the hope that I might be the means of giving him some relief. I asked if he had been long distressed. He said he had been uneasy for above a year, but that the last two months he was in great anx-

iety, and that he was every day getting worse and worse, and saw no outgate for himself. He bewailed much the waywardness of his heart in all his attempts to pray and repent. He said, that when most desirous to pray, he could not fix his heart; and so his most earnest attempts to repent were rendered utterly unavailing. I was truly glad to hear him going on with a most pitiful relation of his case. When he finished I paused a little, and said, 'It seems to me that you are a lost sinner; I know nothing for you but to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.' With the utmost surprise he replied, 'What! would you have me to believe as I am?' 'Yes,' said I, 'just as you are, for you can never prepare yourself for it more than you are just now.' I endeavoured to show him that he mistook the character of the Saviour when he thought he durst not believe till he had prepared himself for it by prayer and repentance; that salvation was the gift of God, through Christ, to lost sinners; and if he was a lost sinner, he was as welcome to it as any other, for there was no respect of persons with God. I endeavoured to show him that God suited his salvation to the needs of lost sinners, and to their bad rather than their good qualifications, for he knew that a sinner could have none of these till Himself should bestow them upon him; that salvation, and faith, and repentance, and good designs, are all the gifts of God, and freely offered to him in the gospel, and that he ought thankfully and without delay to accept of them; that if he would do so, he would be happy from that moment, and if he would not, all his attempts to pray and repent would be lost labour. In a word, I preached the gospel to him, and his anxiety began to abate.*

"I asked if my labours in Princetown had seemed to do good since I left them. He told me there was a considerable change

* The late Doctor Keir informed me that this man's name was Edward Ramsay—that he appeared through all his life to be a man of sincere piety—that he was for many years an elder, and as such a support to the Doctor and useful in the congregation—that he trained an excellent family, and that his death was a peculiarly happy one.

for the better among them. I went on the rest of my way rejoicing in hope. When I arrived among them, I found that the greater part, by far, had persevered and grown in knowledge beyond my expectation, though a few had neglected their baptismal engagements. I visited as many of them as I could, exhorting them to grow in grace. They were anxious to know if there was any word of a minister for them. I told them there was none, and advised them to commit the case to God in prayer, as He was the best provider of ministers. I supplied several new places with sermon, as Bedeque, Tryon River, &c."

He has here set down his visit to Prince Edward Island, in 1794, as his second, but the old settlers of George Town, or Three Rivers, maintain that he visited that district in the preceding year, so that this must have been his third visit. The fact is, that he had gone so many times, and his narrative being written after his memory had failed, he sometimes mistook the year of his visits, and sometimes confounded the events of two different journeys. The remainder of this narrative was written after he had had a stroke of paralysis, and though some of his most interesting and laborious journeys were taken after this date, yet the narrative is meagre, and without that minuteness of detail, and vividness of description, which renders the former portions so interesting. Even of his visits at this time to Prince Edward Island, much is omitted. We shall supply what we are able.

As just mentioned, the old settlers of George Town maintain, that he first visited that settlement in 1793. He was piloted through the woods from Charlotte Town, there being no path. The settlers were then few in number. The first settlement had been made by Mr. David Higgins, in the year 1769. He had a small vessel and established a small fishing station at St. Andrews' Point, on the place now occupied by the Hon. Joseph Wightman. In July, 1775, arrived a number of emigrants from Dumfriesshire, sent out by the proprietor of the lot on the north side of Montague River. In the following spring a number of them moved over to Pictou, and others went to neigh-

bouring settlements. Those who remained, were, during the next winter, reduced to the utmost extremity for want of provisions, having been obliged to cut through ice on the shore, four feet thick, to dig up clams. An opportune supply of provisions in the following spring in Mr. Higgins' vessel, preserved them from starvation, and the new crop coming to their assistance, they from that period began to surmount their difficulties. Still, even at this period, the number of inhabitants was very small. He preached in the parlour of the house, now occupied by the Hon. Joseph Wightman, then occupied by Mr. David Irving. That parlour, which is by no means large, contained all the adult population of Three Rivers. This was the first sermon ever preached in the district. All the Dumfries settlers were Presbyterians, and listened with eagerness to the word of life, some of them not having heard a sermon since they left their native land, eighteen years before.

He remained among them several days, engaged as usual. He preached on a week-day before he left, and baptized a number of children. One child he refused to baptize because the father would not make affidavit that he had been married to the child's mother. But the most interesting circumstance of his visit was that on it he was the means of bringing to the knowledge of the truth, a poor slave of the name of Sickles, owned by Mr. William Creed, a gentleman who had emigrated from Boston. When on a visit on the following year, he baptized him, and through his influence with his master succeeded in obtaining his liberty. Sickles always retained a warm feeling of veneration for the Doctor, and always spoke of him as his spiritual father.

We may mention here that on the Doctor's next visit in the year 1800, when he was about leaving for Pictou, in Mr. David Irving's boat, Mrs. Creed sent him a present of a lamb, by the hand of Sickles, who though now free was still in the employment of his former master; and the Doctor, it was supposed, thinking the lamb to be Sickles' own gift, but we would rather believe, from his own interest in the individual, sent him by

return of the boat from Pictou, a copy of "Boston's Fourfold State." From this volume and the Bible, Sickles matured his views of Christian doctrine and duty. He lived a consistent life to a very great age, and died in full hope of a glorious resurrection. That volume is still preserved in the pious negro's family.

We shall conclude this chapter by recording an incident which must have occurred on one of these journeys. There is some dispute about the place where it occurred, and the individual who was the subject of it. We have formed our own conclusion on these points. But we content ourselves with giving the incident as we have received it, merely remarking that as we have heard it from different persons, as told by the Doctor himself, and with the same details, there cannot be the least doubt of its truth.

In travelling from one settlement to another in company with a guide, they unexpectedly discovered that they had lost their way. As commonly happens with persons travelling in the woods, they had come back upon their own track. The guide was surprised. He said he knew every step of the way, and he could not understand how he had missed it, but proposed to try it again. They did so, but with the same result. The man said, "That's very strange, I know the way perfectly, but you have been talking to me, and I must have missed the path attending to what you were saying. We'll try it again, and don't say any thing to me." They made a third attempt, but with little better result, and this time night came on. Coming upon the hut of a new settler, they resolved to remain there all night. They went in, and the guide introduced him as Mr. MacGregor, a minister from Pictou. The owner of the house received him very ungraciously, and showed no disposition to retain him. "Oh," said the Doctor, "it is now late, and you would not turn us out." The man consented to entertain them for the night, but with no great cordiality. In the morning he told them that they were going to have "a raising," that is, to erect a frame; and as they were scarce of hands, he thought, that, in

return for the entertainment of the night, they ought to lend their assistance. The Doctor consented, judging that all the *men* in the neighbourhood would be present, (if not the *women* also as was sometimes necessary in those days,) and that he might thus have an opportunity of addressing a word of exhortation to those assembled. It turned out to be a frolic, and that rum was supplied in abundance. When the frame was raised, the liquor beginning to operate, some of them began to quarrel, and were likely to get into a fight. Partly to draw them off from their purpose, he proposed to preach to them. He, accordingly took out his pocket-bible, and laying it upon a stump, he gave out a psalm, which he sang himself. He then prayed and gave out a text. A few of the more moderate attended to him from the beginning, but most stood aloof. His singing attracted some attention, and some began to come nearer to him. Still, even when he began his sermon some were looking on with indifference, and his host of the preceding night among the most distant. As he went on with his discourse, the company began to draw nearer, until, before he was done, he had them all close around him, with upturned faces, eagerly listening to the word of life. His host the night before was the last to come in, but ultimately he joined the rest.

When the service was over, he came up to the Doctor and said, "I want you to come back and stay with me to night." The Doctor replied, "Why, I came to your house last night, and you were unwilling to keep me." "I know I was," said the man, "but I was wrong. I heard part of your sermon to-day, and I should have heard the whole of it. I want you to come and stay with me to night, and tell me more of what you were telling to day." The man also argued that he could not reach the place at which he intended to preach in time to have service that day, but that word could be circulated of preaching on the following day, and that he would then go with him to conduct him. The Doctor felt it his duty to comply with the request thus urgently made, and accordingly spent most of the night with him in religious conversation. It was a night

of gladness in that cottage. That night "salvation came to that house." "The day spring from on high" visited that humble abode; "the wilderness and the solitary place were glad," for the messenger of salvation, and there was "joy in the presence of the angels of God, over a sinner repenting." We know not how long the man's anxiety continued, but we know that ultimately he was "filled with joy and peace in believing." He not only accompanied the Doctor to preaching on the following day, but eagerly waited on him in all his ministrations during the time of his visit. It is also said that he afterward bore the character of a pious man till the end of his days, and that he was an influential member of the church. It is also said that whenever he had the opportunity he was very attentive to Doctor MacGregor, and that the very spot on which that frame was raised was afterward the site of a church.

This narrative suggests several reflections. It affords an exemplification of the remarkable manner in which Providence orders events for gathering his chosen into his fold. How strange, that the minister's guide losing his way should be the means by which God would bring salvation to that man! But, wherever there is an elect soul, God is never at a loss for means to accomplish his purpose of mercy with regard to it. Some of the circumstances in the train of events by which his designs are carried out, may seem trifling, but none of them are accidental. They all form part of that scheme of Providence, which is but the execution of that "eternal purpose which God had purposed in himself before the world began." It also shows the propriety of ministers embracing every opportunity afforded in Providence for preaching the gospel. Few would have deemed "a frolic" on the occasion of raising a frame, a suitable occasion for proclaiming Christ crucified. But we see what happy results flowed from embracing such an opportunity. How appropriate the apostolic injunction, "Preach the gospel; be instant in season, and *out of season!*" It also shows that we should not despair of the salvation of any, even of those whose characters appear most unpromising. Divine grace is sover-

eign in its choice, and often those whom we least expect are made the monuments of the Spirit's power.

The short account which he gives of his labours during the winter of 1795, will conclude our history of those years when he laboured alone, in many respects the most important of his life.

"1795.—Things went on agreeably in my own congregation at home. This winter I met with a providence, simple and kind, which was a great encouragement to me. On Friday it came a deep snow, and on Saturday a strong thaw, that made the snow so heavy as to render the snow-shoes useless. I fretted much on Saturday. My only consolation was, that many of the people would not attend. I went to bed, believing that it was quite impossible for me to preach at the West River on the following day; but during the night it froze very hard, so that the snow was perfectly capable of bearing me without snow-shoes. I went to the church with a light step, and a light heart, met a considerable congregation, and preached with pleasure."

CHAPTER XIV.

FROM THE ARRIVAL OF MESSRS. BROWN AND ROSS TILL HIS MARRIAGE.—1795-1796.

"Two are better than one; they have a good reward for their labour.—And a threefold cord is not easily broken." Eccl. iv. 9, 12. "It is not good that the man should be alone." Gen. ii. 18.

1795. This year was to him a memorable one, as the year in which, after years of lonely toil, and numerous disappointments, it was his privilege, in answer to many prayers, to welcome two fellow-labourers come to take part with him in the ministry. It is scarcely possible for us to conceive the importance of such an event to him, or the joy of which it was the occasion. For nine years he had been enduring most arduous toil, without the support, the sympathy, or the counsel of a brother in the ministry—and even in a great measure deprived of the society of men of intelligence and education. He felt the loss for himself, for "as iron sharpeneth iron, so a man's countenance his friend," but much more so on account of numbers perishing around him, with none to care for their souls. Not only was his own congregation in need of assistance, and requiring more labour than he was able to afford, but settlements all around were clamouring for the bread of life; petition after petition had gone home in every form of moving appeal, and letter after letter had he sent to the Synod, and to friends, in every variety of melting entreaty on their behalf, only to re-

ceive barren expresssions of sympathy. Fervent and importunate supplication had he made to ascend before the Lord of the Harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest; and though his prayers were not unheard, the promise still tarried, and he had felt that hope deferred maketh the heart sick. Appointments had been once and again made by the Synod, and his expectations were raised only to end in bitter disappointment. And now, at length, his prayers were to be answered. "The time to favour" this portion of the church, even the set time had come, and he was to receive the assistance of two faithful brethren. We need not wonder that his joy was extravagant.*

The men whom God had kindly brought to his assistance, were men for whom he had reason to bless the Author of all natural and spiritual gifts. Mr. Ross was a man of more than ordinary powers of mind, a clear thinker, a forcible writer, possessing a sound practical judgment, that rendered him valuable in the transaction of the public business of the church, and a pleasant humour which rendered him the delightful companion of private life, though not possessing so much of those qualities of voice and outward manner, commonly called popular talents, by which many men of inferior talents would excite more of public attention. Mr. Brown again, without the reasoning powers of Mr. Ross, was more distinguished as a man of amiable character, who would, in every position in which Providence might have placed him, have won the blessing of the peacemaker. They were both men who preached the gos-

* Being on a visit to Prince Edward Island, he crossed Richmond Bay in a boat in company with Mr. Patrick and we believe some other members of Presbytery. When they landed, the day being cold Mr. Patrick began stamping on the ground with his feet to keep the blood in circulation. Some one said, "Why, Mr. Patrick you seem inclined to dance." "Well," said the Doctor, "I was once inclined to dance. When I was alone, a man came into my room before I was up, and told me that a minister had come to Truro. I immediately sprang out of bed and danced across the room." His joy, however, was abated when he learned afterward, that he was a "rank Arminian."

pel faithfully, both men who loved the prosperity of Zion, and both men whose private society was a pleasure.

The manner of their appointment was also interesting. They were not seized upon by the Synod and banished to America by the stern fiat of ecclesiastical authority, they were not men of that class whom the churches in Scotland have sometimes sent to the Western Continent, who having made a fair trial of their gifts and being found unsuitable for Scotland were regarded as *therefore* perfectly fitted for the colonies. They came in the spirit of self-dedication to the work, and it was to him peculiarly gratifying, that he was the direct means in the hands of Providence of leading them to this country. When students of Theology of two years standing, attending the Hall at Whitburn, they were so moved by Doctor MacGregor's appeals, particularly his letter of 1792, that they pledged themselves to one another, that if spared to complete their studies, and receive license, they would go to his assistance. To bind themselves more securely, they put their engagement in writing, and signed their names to it. The paper containing this engagement was accidentally left in one of the books of the Library, which they had been perusing. The Librarian having discovered it there, carried it to the Professor, who made known its contents to the Synod, who resolved to make them ready without delay, and at their session in 1794 ordered them to be taken on trials for license, after the forthcoming session of the Hall, and to proceed to Nova Scotia on the following spring. As Mr. Ross used humorously to describe it, they were lectured for one season on heresy, and another on superstition, and then banished to America.

They sailed for New York in the spring of 1795, and landed there on the 27th May. Thence they sailed for Halifax. They staid there a few days, and preached one Sabbath. And thence proceeded to Pictou, Mr. Ross by land, and Mr. Brown by water. But we must allow the Doctor himself to describe their arrival in Pictou.

"In June I heard with joy and wonder of the appoint-

ment,* and soon of the arrival of Messrs. Brown and Ross. I gave heartfelt thanks to God for his goodness in sending them, and prayed that he might make them a blessing. I provided men and horses, and went with great alacrity to meet them. We met Mr. Ross at Truro, in the house of the Rev. Mr. Cock. He informed us that Mr. Brown and his wife had gone to Pictou by water. Next day we returned to Pictou, and very shortly Mr. and Mrs. Brown arrived there also in good health. They all stayed for a little time in Pictou to refresh themselves. Meantime the Sacrament of the Supper was dispensed. Messrs. Brown and Ross assisted in preaching and serving the tables. The younger part of the congregation were surprised at the exact agreement of the doctrines and prayers of the old and the new ministers. They had heard the new ministers with the utmost attention, and they could not observe the least inconsisteney. It seemed as if my tongue had been in their mouths. I was delighted with this agreeable evidence of their attention in hearing, as I was satisfied of its justice. At the conclusion of this Sacrament, I could not but admire the goodness of God. I had been alone nine long years."

One or two incidents connected with their arrival may be here given. When the Doctor met Mr. Ross at Truro, the latter was dressed in the fashion, having his hair duly powdered; but the former being accustomed to the woods, and being on a journey, was roughly clad, and his coat had even a hole at the elbow. Mr. Ross with his usual love of fun, putting his finger into the hole, said, "Are you a beggarman?" "Oh," was the reply, "when you are as long in the woods as I have been, you will have holes in your coat too." Mr. Ross remained to preach a Sabbath in Truro, so that Mr. Brown was the first to arrive in Pictou. The following interesting incident of their meeting was given us by Mr. John Douglass. As the latter with one or two other lads were preparing the seats on the Intervale at Middle River on the morning of the Fast day, Doctor Mac-

* This is a slight error. It should be either their ordination or sailing. He had heard of their *appointment* the year previous.

Gregor came along from the East River. He informed them that he was going to meet a new minister. They asked if they might accompany him. He replied, "Oh, yes." They proceeded along the left bank of the river, and soon met Mr. Brown in company with Mr. Mortimer. After exchanging salutations the Doctor said, "Now you 'll preach, Mr. Brown." "Oh, you 'll preach yourself," said Mr. Brown. "Would *you ask me to preach that has not heard a sermon for nine years?*" was Mr. MacGregor's appeal. Mr. Brown could not resist this, and immediately replied, "Say no more, I 'll preach." He accordingly did so on the words of the prophet, "This is the name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness." The Doctor listened with intense delight, and when Mr. Brown had finished, and the Gaelic service was about to begin, he rose and said, "My friends, I have been praying for years for a minister to come to us, and I hope that you have been praying for one too, and now God has sent us one and you have heard him, and see that he is a good gospel minister. Let us return thanks." He then began to pray, and as my informant expressed it, "he fell a crying," and the congregation were almost equally affected, but he went on to pour forth his soul in thanksgiving to the Giver of all good with a fervency long remembered.

Arrangements were made for having full services according to the usual practice at that time both in English and Gaelic, Messrs. Brown and Ross conducting the former and the Doctor the latter. On the Monday he shortened the service in Gaelic, and went over to where the English service was, and when Mr. Ross finished, he seized him in his arms and held him in a long embrace.

The next step was to form themselves into a Presbytery. This was done on the 7th July, the place of meeting being Robert Marshall's barn, being chosen as central for the whole of Pictou. "By the direction of Synod, the three ministers formed ourselves into a Presbytery, denominated the Associate Presbytery of Nova Scotia. On this occasion I preached on Neh. ii. 20, 'The God of heaven, he will prosper us; there-

fore we his servants will arise and build.' The Session of Pictou appointed one of their number to attend the Presbytery. Mr. Ross was appointed to preach at different places in Prince Edward Island, and Mr. Brown at Londonderry and Onslow."

As a Presbytery was now constituted, some picture of its meetings may be given. From the character of the men who composed it, we need not say that they were scenes of brotherly love and hallowed enjoyment. The same remark will apply both when the Presbytery consisted of these three, and afterward when joined by Mr. Dick and Doctor MacCulloch. The strongest feelings of personal attachment sprung up between all the members, founded on personal esteem, and each was ready to co-operate with the other in every good work. They seldom were permitted to meet one another from distance and the difficulty of travelling, and hence their meetings of Presbytery, as almost the only occasions, when they could enjoy each other's society, were looked forward to with eager anticipation. Doctor MacGregor's family recollect that he would count the days till the time of meeting, and as it came near, he could sometimes scarcely sit still from excitement. The occasions of their meetings were commonly the times of the dispensation of the Sacrament of the Supper in their various congregations. When it seemed necessary to meet on other occasions, the place of meeting was usually Mr. Christie's house, Salmon River, as midway between the brethren in Pictou and those in Londonderry and Shubenacadie.

When they did assemble, their meetings were scenes of rich enjoyment. Business we fear was often a secondary matter. We have been told, that they settled what business they had to do sitting round the fire smoking their pipes. At all events for five years they kept no minutes. But their meetings were scenes of genuine and hearty Christian fellowship. Their success or their trials in the work of their common Lord were told to those, from whom they met with a ready sympathy. The doings of God with the nations of the earth (for those were times in which his judgments were abroad) and the state of the

church throughout the world, excited speculation or called out their expressions of awe for his judgments, and gratitude for his mercies. The intelligence from the old world was then received at distant intervals, and for much of what they received of an ecclesiastical nature, they were indebted to their correspondence with private friends. But the more rarely it came the richer treat did it afford, and especially when the great movements of the present age for missions and the circulation of the Scriptures commenced, they found subjects on which they loved to commune with peculiar and hallowed delight. At other times the meaning of particular passages of Scripture or the prophecies, especially in their bearing upon the movements of their own day or the glorious things spoken of the future of Zion, of which the movements of our day seemed to be the foretaste —formed the subjects of discussion, and thus hour after hour went by, and they felt as if they could not separate.

But we must not suppose that all was grave discussion. On the contrary they, on such occasions, loved to unbend themselves, and many a scene of harmless merriment was mingled with more serious discussion. Mr. Ross's ready humour was always provocative of mirth, while Doctor MacCulloch's brilliant "crackling thoughts," as Doctor Heugh described them, added a peculiar zest to their fellowship. Then came the amusing anecdotes, the harmless banter, the keen encounter of wit, causing the whole to be interspersed with roars of laughter, which sometimes astonished simple folk, who, beholding them only amid the solemnities of sacred things, were not prepared to see them giving way to such levity. Doctor MacGregor, it will be seen by his productions, had a vein of humour, and could take his share in the fun, but he was an older man than the rest, and generally more grave, so that when their mirth grew rather uproarious he would check them; and he seemed always glad to draw the conversation into other channels, particularly to what was doing for the advancement of Christ's kingdom. In this way their conversation extended far into the night, or toward morning. One person has told me that he

has seen them continue till the day began to break, and then without undressing throw themselves on a bed to snatch a few moments' repose before proceeding on their respective courses. We do not say that a shade of improper feeling *never* clouded for a moment the brightness of their fellowship. But we do say that it is rarely that we behold so beautiful, so uninterrupted, and so long continued illustration of the saying of scripture, "Behold, how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

After the formation of the Presbytery, the next step was the determination of their respective spheres of labour, and their settlement in them. This he describes as follows:

"1796.—At next meeting of Presbytery there were two calls for each of them. Mr. Ross had a call from Pictou, and Princetown in Prince Edward Island; Mr. Brown, from Londonderry and Amherst. The Presbytery appointed Mr. Ross to Pictou, and Mr. Brown to Londonderry,—both decisions as contrary to my thoughts as could be, for I had appointed Mr. Ross to Princetown, and Mr. Brown to Amherst. I bowed however to the will of Providence, and consoled myself with the thought that disappointed places would get more supply of sermon than hitherto. Mr. Brown was settled at Londonderry, (where he is still acceptable),* but Amherst was so disappointed that a number of them sold their farms and went off to other parts of the Province and to the United States. Amherst got another minister long after who left them, and they are now vacant.

"Pictou was divided into three congregations, as it was not doubted that a third minister would soon be needed. Mr. Ross had the West River, and I the East. The Harbour was reserved for a third minister; but, meantime, Mr. Ross and I agreed to preach alternately to them.

"As soon as Mr. Ross and I were fixed in our respective congregations in Pictou, Merigomish, fifteen miles to the East, and Stewiacke, twenty or twenty-five miles to the South West, both of which I had occasionally supplied before, petitioned for a

* Since gone to his rest.

supply of our services statedly to the extent of one fourth or one-fifth of our time. With our consent these petitions were granted; till we should tire of going to them. This was a great addition to our toil, yet we endured it for a number of years. But after some years' time, both these places got ministers to themselves. Merigomish got Mr. Patrick from Scotland, and Stewiacke got Mr. Graham from Cornwallis in this Province by transportation."

About these settlements, we cannot but feel that the Doctor's views were prompted by a view of the necessities of the different places, and that the arrangement adopted was much less fitted to meet the wants of the church. By it Prince Edward Island was left entirely without a minister, and Amherst, which was the first place to seek one, was again disappointed. In the latter place the Presbyterian cause never recovered from the disappointment. The few who remained in connection with the Presbytery received supply of preaching for a time, and after several years obtained a succession of ministers, who, however, failed in reparing their breaches. The first was Mr. Mitchell, of the London Missionary Society, who discouraged, left them after a few years' labour. He was followed by Mr. Liddle of the secession, who after three years left them, both parties being dissatisfied, and much ill-feeling between them. At his departure the heart of Presbyterianism seemed thoroughly broken. Those who retained the name lost all hope of ever seeing the thing revived, and many gave up the name altogether. Other denominations took advantage of this state of things, to advance their own interests; and to crown their disasters, they received as their minister one of those vagrants, who had adopted the ministerial name without the ministerial character, and who left Presbyterianism there, not only with its ranks broken, but with an unpleasant savour.

They have more recently, however obtained, the services of the Rev. Alexander Clarke, of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, whose labours extending over a large surrounding country, have been blessed to the founding of a number of

churches, and who has now three fellow-labourers within the sphere of his original circuit.

But some interesting circumstances may be here mentioned regarding the division of labour between the two Pictou ministers. The people there had been very willing to receive the services of a second minister, but when it was proposed to divide the congregation in two, the one part to receive the services of Doctor MacGregor, and the other of Mr. Ross, the whole congregation was in a flame, no part being willing to give up the services of the former. Mr. Ross bore the discussions that took place very good humoredly, involving as they did the assumption of his inferiority. Mr. Otterson, of Truro, said to him, "This is not very encouraging to you, Mr. Ross." "Oh, yes," said he, "it is. What better encouragement could I wish, than to see people so unwilling to give up the man, who had laboured among them for nine years? When I have laboured as long among them, I hope they will be as unwilling to part with me."

To decide the question as to which side of the congregation each should have as the sphere of his labours, it was resolved to appeal to the lot. Viewing this as a religious ordinance, they proceeded in the matter with all due solemnity. The whole was done in the Presbytery duly constituted. The Moderator offered prayer, and then the papers containing the places for each were drawn by Thomas Fraser, Elder of the East River. The decision was that Doctor MacGregor should go to the East River. The people on the West River, however, were dissatisfied, and accused Mr. Fraser of having seen the papers that contained the names, and of having drawn with that knowledge. A second trial was resolved upon. Two young boys were selected to draw the lots, and the same process was gone through with all due solemnity. But this time the lot fell to the West River. Doctor MacGregor, however, disapproved altogether of the second trial, regarding it as a tempting of Providence, and when urged to carry out the decision of the lot he positively refused, saying, that it was to the East River he ought to go, and to the

East River he would go. When the West River pressed their claims, he told them that if they did get him it would not be a blessing. This cooled a number of them to him, their pride was a little wounded, and they became more willing to receive the services of Mr. Ross.

An arrangement was made, that, while Doctor MacGregor should be on the East River and Mr. Ross on the West, they should exchange preaching a certain number of days.

They continued to labour thus for a period of about five years, Doctor MacGregor on the east side of the congregation, embracing the Upper and Lower Settlements of the East River and Merigomish, and Mr. Ross on the West, embracing the West River and the Harbour, and going part of his time to Stewiacke; but there was no distinct division of the congregation, Mr. Ross being inducted as minister of Pictou, jointly with Doctor MacGregor.

Matters did not go on altogether smoothly under this arrangement. It was not altogether satisfactory to the ministers. And the people on the west side were still dissatisfied, and toward the close of the year 1800 they again made application to the Presbytery, either to have Doctor MacGregor as minister of that portion of the congregation, or to have him labour jointly with Mr. Ross over the whole. The result of this movement was a division of the congregation into three, the East River, the West River, and the Harbour. Doctor MacGregor continued on the East River. Mr. Ross demitted his charge, and received a call anew to the West River, while the Harbour remained vacant.

A party on the West River, however, still continued dissatisfied with Mr. Ross, and for a time went over to the East River to attend Doctor MacGregor's preaching, and when Doctor MacCulloch was settled in town, they went there to hear him. To the present generation, it will be somewhat surprising that a number of the most intelligent men on the West River, and these not Highlanders, who might have been supposed to have been attracted to Doctor MacGregor by language and country,

then spoke in the most disparaging terms of Mr. Ross's preaching. But the truth seems to have been that they were so blinded by their attachment to Doctor MacGregor, that when another was brought into competition with him they could see no good in him whatever. We may mention that they all at length fell in with Mr. Ross, and some of them became his most attached friends. One of them was in the habit of saying, "I ance joined a faction, but I wadna do it again, if I should live a thousand years."

After his settlement, Mr. Ross went to Stewiacke, for thirteen Sabbaths in the year. He ordained Elders there, and for two or three seasons dispensed the Sacrament of the Supper, with the assistance of Doctor MacGregor and Mr. Brown. A party here, however, adhered to the Presbytery of Truro, and having obtained the services of the Rev. Hugh Graham, Mr. Ross said he had not freedom to go any longer, as he considered that his doing so would only be perpetuating division, and urged his friends to unite with Mr. Graham. Some of them held aloof for a time, but through the conciliatory manner of the latter they were ultimately led to connect themselves with his congregation.

We must now turn to a settlement of another character. "Sometime this year Mr. Ross came to my lodging, riding on a large majestic horse, which he said was his own. This made me think seriously about getting a horse too. Time, and the increase of settlers, had made a considerable change for the better on the roads. I saw also some of my hearers riding to church, and, though not with ease, yet I thought with more ease than walking; so I bought a horse. I needed him as much as ever, for a new meeting house was now built, ten miles farther up than the first. I had no ease by the arrival of Mr. Ross, for I had to preach Sabbath about at the upper meeting house, as distant as the West River, besides going to Merigomish.

"Some time after I saw Mr. Ross again, and he informed me of a lot of land that he was buying, with a view to marriage

and a settled life. I thought that I needed to do both these things too, and accordingly did them within the year."

A writer in a periodical lately remarks, "Let a biographer, in writing the life of a grave divine, whose voice has been often heard in Synod or Assembly, *relate a few well authenticated anecdotes of his courtship;* of his quarrels with his heritors or elders, of his feats of strength, agility, and physical courage, and he would certainly be severely censured. But why should he? Might he not by so doing furnish means of forming a more accurate estimate of his hero's character, and afford more curious matter of speculation to the inquisitive observer of human life and manners, than can be found either in letters or diaries?" In the force of the above remarks we entirely concur, and as the circumstances of the Doctor's marriage were perfectly unique, and as they illustrate his situation and the state of the country at the time, we shall furnish some details on the subject. And when we consider at what length that volume, which contains the highest models of biography, relates the nuptials of Isaac, we are not without inspired authority for so doing.

When he left Scotland he went forth alone. This we believe was a necessity, for we have been informed that he sought at that time a young lady, to whom he afterwards applied; but her friends objected against the union, because she was "owre young to marry yet," and for other good and sufficient reasons, as they deemed them. After his arrival he felt that it was "not good for man to be alone." His unmarried state gave occasion to the malicious to circulate stories about him. The individual, already mentioned as distinguished through life for his enmity to him and the gospel, went so far as to attempt to bribe a servant girl in the house, and she was a Catholic too, with a present of a gown, then an article of value, to declare before the Session, that he had sought criminal intercourse with her. And although the girl had conscience enough to expose the plot, yet such things were fitted to injure his reputation. Besides, as has been already remarked, he was far from having such a state

of things in his lodgings as was desirable either for his comfort or usefulness.

Efforts were therefore made in various quarters to obtain a helpmeet, and it is both amusing and instructive to look back on the difficulties which he had in accomplishing that end. His thoughts naturally reverted to the object of his youthful affection, but to his application to her fond parent, a worthy antiburgher minister under whom he had spent part of his youthful days, there came the following response: "Though I am persuaded you are not serious in what you wrote, yet as you are at so great a distance, I think it friendly to say that what you propose by way of question, were you in earnest, would never be consented to by any person concerned. The person you speak of has not either qualifications of body or mind for undergoing the hardships of such a long voyage and journey. I really think that you should try to provide yourself with one in Nova Scotia." Again, to another, likewise the daughter of an antiburgher minister, we find among his correspondence the following allusions. His good friend, Mr. Buist, says in a letter, "As to Miss B——n, if you can get her to come I will put her into the hands of a captain, who will send her safe to Halifax, and if such a thing should be I will get her passage at least part paid if I can." But the following came as a damper from the fair one's anxious parent. "I am much obliged to you for the affection and esteem you express of Anny. I doubt not but it is mutual, otherwise she might have been settled ere now. But I really think that Divine Providence has thwarted your mutual intention in setting you so far distant from each other. Although it has been the fashion for years, that British ladies take a sail to the East Indies to be married, and even to seek husbands, yet this piece of modern female fashion Anny does not choose to imitate, as judging it not quite so becoming her sex. Dear brother, Providence, which orders every man's lot, and which seems to have forbid the wished for union, knows what is best for you both, and its own intention toward you; it is duty therefore to submit to the

disposal thereof. You have certainly the best wishes of all of us. While I have written as above, I suppose that by this time you have united to some agreeable young lady. If so, I sincerely wish you much joy."*

To those who knew the Doctor in his later years, when far and near throughout these Lower Provinces he was regarded with a veneration similar to what we may suppose the apostle John to have enjoyed at Ephesus in his old age from the whole of Asia Minor, and when abroad his heavenly character, and self-denying labours and sacrifices, had won him the esteem of many of the most eminent in the church, it will be interesting to observe the difficulty he had in the early stage of his career, in obtaining a suitable partner to share with him his labours and troubles; and we doubt not that the want of a helpmeet for him greatly increased the burden of his cares. The want of the ministering of gentle woman deprived him of many outward comforts, and the want of her soothing influence made his trials press with heavier weight upon his spirit.

For five or six years after the above correspondence we know of no efforts that were made to supply the want, but the matter occupied the attention of busy-bodies. At length, encouraged as it would appear by Mr. Ross's success, he resolved on an effort on this side the Atlantic. But there were none in his congregation possessing the qualifications deemed requisite for the station, and he had no time to spare from his onerous duties to look abroad. He was therefore under the necessity of being guided by the opinions of others. From several quarters he received the highest recommendations of Miss Ann MacKay, daughter of Mr. Roderick MacKay. But having no time to spare for those interesting attentions by which the hearts of gentle maidens are won, and scarcely having seen her,†

* We suppose that it may not be made a secret that one of these became afterward the wife of the Rev. Samuel Gilfillan, and mother of the Rev. Geo. Gilfillan.

† It is indeed commonly said that he never saw her till a few minutes before the marriage ceremony took place.

or forming any judgment of her by personal acquaintance, he wrote to her, stating his circumstances, and putting the all important question. The forwarding of his communication was not so simple a matter as we moderns would suppose. There was no regular mail communication between Pictou and the capital,* and the usual mode of conveyance was by special messenger. We have heard, too, that in those times, when every person knew every other person, over an extent of two or three counties, and their business too, it was not uncommon to show their friendly interest in each other's welfare by freely opening one another's letters. Independent of this the business itself was one requiring a messenger, with all the faithfulness of an Eliezer. Such an one was found in the late Andrew Marshall, who performed his mission with all the zeal for his minister's honour and comfort, all the tact and all the faithfulness of Abraham's steward, and had it to tell of to his dying day, and with no small feeling of self-importance.

We may here remark that her father was one of three brothers who emigrated from the neighbourhood of Inverness to Pictou, in its early settlement, two of them in the ship Hector, and one a short time after. The eldest, Alexander, had been a soldier, and had seen hard service under General Wolfe; having been seven weeks in the expedition against Louisburg, without changing his clothes, and having been in the thickest of the fight, on the plains of Abraham. Of one member of his family we shall have occasion to speak presently. The second, Donald, was the Elder, who was long the Doctor's firmest support. The third, Roderick, father of the bride, was a man in some respects like them. He had a quick off-hand manner, and was distinguished by great boldness and determination.

His wife was very respectably connected, and through the interest of her friends he had obtained a situation in the Dock-Yard, at Halifax, whither he moved from Pictou. She was a

* The first regular mail began to be carried in December, 1801. The first courier was the late Mr. Stewart, of Mount Thom. At first he carried the mail in his pocket, and travelled on foot.

woman of great firmness and strength of mind, of which the following incident may be cited as proof. When the first settlers arrived in Pictou the Indians were very bold, and the Whites were afraid of them. She, however, never yielded to them, and when they came into her house she feared not even to scold them if they took any undue liberties. On one occasion some of them coming in, asked her, "What news?" She replied, "Aha! great news. There is another regiment of soldiers arrived in Halifax, and you must now behave yourselves." They went away, and shortly after there came an invitation to all the Whites to attend a great feast provided for them by the red brethren. This invitation was accepted, and on going to the place appointed they found provided every variety of provision, which the sea or the forest afforded, fish, flesh, and fowl, which they allowed the Whites to cook in their own way. This was intended as a grand peace-offering, and as such was accepted, though historically I suppose we should speak of it as *the first pic-nic* in the County of Pictou.

Their daughter partook of the active habits and the resolute character of her parents, all being sanctified by the grace of God. She had received the best education which the country at that time could afford, though circumstances rendered it necessary that her industry in the use of her needle should be employed in the maintenance of the family. She was an accomplished seamstress and as such had resided in some of the most respectable families in Halifax. This discipline we need not say was all well calculated to fit her for the sphere she was afterward to occupy. Andrew, the faithful Eliezer, having discharged his part, the lady gave her consent and all preliminaries were arranged.

At the appointed time, which was at seed time, in 1796, he set out, taking with him as companion in travel, and as groomsman, Mr. Alex. MacKay, son of Alexander before mentioned, and cousin of his intended. The only mode of travelling at that time was either on foot or on horseback. The latter was preferred, and the only two horses on the East River considered

fit for the journey were put in requisition for the important occasion. Such was the way of bringing home a bride.* And there was then no such thing as spending the honeymoon in tours of pleasure; but it is worthy of record, as illustrating his devotedness to the great work of his life, that his marriage trip was made a missionary excursion. He and his faithful companion, accordingly, set out toward the close of the week. They were met by Mr. Brown, at West River, and a young man, who was on his way to Truro, accompanied them. The road was, as we have formerly described it, a mere path cut through the woods, and except in a few spots not permitting two to ride abreast. The young man, on the way, began throwing stones at some partridges which crossed their path. The Doctor remonstrated with him. The young man argued that they were given to us for our use. "Yes, but you are not needing them," was the reply. We mention this as it affords us a convenient opportunity of noticing a feature of his character, his kindness to inferior animals. He would not kill a snake, and when others would be for doing it, he would remonstrate with them, saying, "Let it live, and enjoy the life that God has given it."

On their arrival at Truro they lodged with Mr. Cock, who, notwithstanding former conflicts, entertained them most hospitably. There, parting with Mr. Brown, they proceeded to Black Rock, at the mouth of the Shubenacadie, and the horses being committed to the care of Mr. MacKay to proceed by land, he proceeded in a boat, about ten miles up the river, to the house of Mr. Thomas Ellis, Fort Ellis, at the junction of the Shubenacadie and Stewiacke, near which the first church on the Shubenacadie was built. It was Saturday when they arrived here, and preaching being intimated for the following day, before daylight the house in which he was staying was filled with persons, who had taken advantage of the tide to come up the river in their boats or canoes. A large congregation assembled, and he

* A number of years later the author's mother, their eldest daughter, then a girl of fifteen or sixteen years of age, rode from the East River to Halifax, over one hundred miles, on horseback to go to school and home again.

preached to them that day, and on Monday proceeded to Halifax. It was near night when he arrived, the marriage service being appointed to take place on the evening of the following day; but, instead of proceeding to the residence of his intended, he went to an inn, to wait there till he should have his outer man in a state fit to make his appearance before her. He had sent orders for a complete suit of apparel, even to his shoes, and until these were ready, he remained at the inn. In the meantime the faithful Aleck is despatched to convey the intelligence of his arrival. On his entering the house he was immediately asked where the groom was. On replying that he had gone to the inn, the young lady began to toss her head, at the seeming want of attention, saying, "I suppose he thinks he has me." Explanations followed, which we presume were satisfactory. The necessary equipments were not ready till some time the next day, nor did he make his appearance till toward evening, so that they never met till a few minutes before their fates were united. The marriage ceremony was performed by the Rev. James Munro, afterward of Antigonish, then a travelling missionary; and, we suppose from his having been originally of the Established Church of Scotland, a license was given for the purpose. The company was small, and the evening passed pleasantly. The Doctor was in the highest spirits, and gave vent to his benevolence in the expression, that he wished they were all as happy as he was that night.

The following day was devoted to the bride's receiving the visits of her friends, numbers of whom came to pay their respects, and bid her farewell. In the meantime the groom having purchased presents for all the members of the family, and a side-saddle for his wife to ride on, they on Thursday set out on their journey homeward. A number of her friends drove out with them to Sackville, about ten miles out, where the road for Pictou diverges from the road to Windsor, this being all the distance to which it was possible to take a carriage. They had brought a supply of provisions with them, and their cloth being spread upon a green spot, they all partook of a refreshment af-

ter the fashion of a modern pic-nic. Their repast being finished they bade their friends farewell, and the bride was mounted on the horse which had been ridden by the faithful Aleck, who now moved along on foot; but, like Asahel, "light of foot as a wild roe,"* he was not only able to keep up with them, but where the roads were bad to get ahead of them. Having thus secured what he had so long desired, he is represented on the journey as not willing to let her a moment out of his sight, a solicitude, we feel justified in saying, not arising from the fear of danger by the way. They arrived at Gays' River that night, where he preached and baptized. After riding down along the side of the river to a convenient point for taking boats, the two horses were entrusted to MacKay, to travel by land, while the newly married couple proceeded down the river by water, he preaching and baptizing at convenient points. On the Sabbath following he preached at the mouth of the Shubenacadie on the western side, where the village of Maitland now stands, to a large congregation. Here they met the faithful Aleck, with the two horses, and also Mr. Mortimer, who had come all the way from Pictou to meet him, and escort him home. In the beginning of the week they again took their journey, and in due time arrived at the East River, and to him might be applied language similar to what is said of Isaac: He "took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and he loved her, and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death."†

On his arrival home he occasionally gave vent to the exuberance of his joy in merriment, which to the old staid Highlanders, with whom a laugh was almost a mortal sin, began to give offence, and it is said that the matter led even to the remonstrances of the Session. But something more serious was

* Literally so, for he once chased, and caught a caribou calf, which was afterward sent to the tower of London, where it continued for several years, being the first specimen of the species ever in that collection of animals.

† The particulars of the marriage excursion I derived from Alexander MacKay himself, who was in February, 1857, when I met with him, still healthy and in the possession of all his mental faculties, though then in his 89th year.

before him. He had been married by license, without proclamation of banns required by Ecclesiastical as well as civil law in Scotland, and by the adherents of time honoured customs he was held as guilty of a heinous violation of church rites. Some of these were eager to have the matter taken up, and to have him censured before the Presbytery. The offence extended throughout the church, some of the Elders of Londonderry being the most zealous on the subject. Ridiculous as it may appear, the affair began to assume a serious aspect, and on his way to the next meeting of Presbytery, which was to be held at Londonderry as usual, after the Sacrament, he exhibited unmistakable signs of anxiety. Good Mr. Brown acted as peacemaker, but with all his efforts he could not satisfy some of the parties, and at length had to speak to Mr. MacGregor on the subject. The latter gravely proposed a friendly meeting in private on the subject The meeting accordingly took place, when the Doctor said to them, "I hear that you are offended at what I have done." They began to profess that they were not offended themselves, but that the matter was causing scandal through the church. "Well," said he, bringing his face to the requisite degree of gravity, though we fear that there lurked a little of the spirit of fun beneath it, "my friends, I am very sorry that any person *should have taken* offence, and I promise that if you will forgive me this time *I will never do it again.*" They did not at first perceive his drift, and with one voice, exclaimed, that his acknowledgment of his errors was perfectly satisfactory,—and that they could ask no more. The report immediately went abroad that he had made very humble acknowledgments, and his conduct affording convincing evidence of the sincerity of his repentance, all parties were satisfied, and the dark cloud which was hanging over the peace of the church was dissipated. He returned home in high spirits,—presenting quite a contrast to his state of mind on going, and to one that asked him, "Did they stop your mouth?" (such was the common talk at the time,) he replied, "No, God has opened it and man will not shut it."

On their arrival home they continued to live as he had previously done in Donald MacKay's house, thus literally enjoying "love in a garret." In the original petition for a minister, it was promised as follows: "Besides, we have agreed to build a house and barn for the minister, and that he shall have a glebe lot of land,—and also that we shall clear so much of it from time to time for his encouragement." This promise was not overlooked, for among his papers we find the following heading of a subscription list:

PICTOU, *April 25th*, 1796.

"We, subscribers, promise to pay to James MacGregor, or his order, for building his house and barn, our respective shares of the sum of one hundred and fifty pounds, in cash or produce, at market price, as shall be most convenient for us at three terms, viz., fifty pounds on the first day of April, 1797, fifty pounds on the first day of April, 1798, and fifty pounds on the first day of April, 1799, which sums respectively are to be divided into shares among us, by an equal assessment on our Polls and Estates, whereby we are discharged of our promise in the original petition for a minister."

This engagement was fulfilled as all pecuniary engagements were in those days, payments being made in all sorts of things, and at all manner of times, and some sums being never paid at all. Yet with all these draw-backs, we think that, considering the state of the country at the time, the effort made by his congregation affords an example to congregations in the present day.

With this assistance he built a house on his father-in-law's farm, *the first frame house on the East River*. But the latter having moved from Halifax with the family, for a time they lived together. MacKay being unwilling to sell, Doctor MacGregor was under the necessity of building again. This time he built of brick, the first erection of the kind we suppose in the whole eastern part of the Province. He engaged a man who had come out from the old country, having some knowledge of brick

making, to make the brick. Some of them were very good, but part were not, requiring to be plastered over, to preserve them from the weather. Here he lived till near the close of his life. The house continued to stand till a few years ago. It was situated near the western bank of the River, just where the operations of the General Mining Association are now being carried on. The traveller passing through this now busy scene of life, and crossing the bridge, may see the spot a few rods down the river, where still stand some willow trees, beneath whose shade he often walked or read, while the scene around exhibited a marked contrast with its present appearance. Where now are seen long ranges of miners' houses—the smoke of factory and steam engine, and is heard the rattling of the railcar, was a scene of retirement, where only a small clearing broke the continuity of the forest, and an almost Sabbath stillness rested upon the face of nature.

It may be added that the union was one of great happiness, and the separation, when it took place some years afterwards, he considered the greatest trial of his life. She was a woman of a lively spirit, of very active habits, and prudent and economical in her household management. "The heart of her husband safely trusted in her," and she took such efficient charge of his domestic affairs, that, as one of my informants expressed it, "he had nothing to do but study." It should here be added, that her father spent the closing years of his life at the East River, and that, though part of his life was not what could have been desired, his later years were, in the Doctor's opinion, those of a sincere penitent.

We may remark that his marriage did not in any degree diminish his labours abroad. "He that marrieth careth for the things that are of the world how he may please his wife;" and it has happened with ministers of religion that the domestic cares resulting from marriage have induced a relaxation in those efforts for the good of the church, involving absence from home. No one could say this of the subject of this memoir. Even with an increasing family he was as ready as ever to listen

to the cry of the destitute for the word of life; and some of his most distant journeys were made after this date. And it is due to the two "faithful women," who were successively his partners, to say that not only did neither offer any hindrance to his missionary labours, but that both felt interested in the work, and afforded him every encouragement in the prosecution of it.

CHAPTER XV.

FROM HIS MARRIAGE TILL THE ORDINATION OF MR. DICK.—1796–1803.

"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest." Matt. ix. 37, 38.

After the formation of the Presbytery, as recorded in the last chapter, the supply of vacancies engaged the attention of the brethren. In consequence of the manner in which the newly arrived ministers were disposed of, these did not derive much advantage from their arrival. Pictou obtained two ministers, and Mr. Brown only filled the place of the Rev. David Smith, who had died a few months before. So that Amherst, Douglass, and the various places in Prince Edward Island were left vacant, while new places were craving supply. The Presbytery did all in their power to meet their necessities. For several years, its members were sent generally once a year and sometimes oftener, on missionary excursions. In this work Doctor MacGregor was ever foremost. He had come to take great delight in it, and scarce a single summer elapsed without his spending some weeks in visiting destitute localities; and some of his longest journeys and most interesting excursions were undertaken after this period. It is to be regretted, however, that we can give but a very imperfect account of them. His own narrative, written after he had had a stroke of para-

lysis, and imperfect as it was, would have gone far to supply the want, but unfortunately the larger portion has been lost. Of the rest of his life, only a few fragments have been preserved, the Presbytery kept no records for the first five years, and though we have carried on a large correspondence, we have been able but very imperfectly to supply the defect.

Two new places now engaged his attention, Cape Breton and Miramichi. To the former he represents himself as proceeding the same summer as his marriage. But we rather think that he availed himself of the privilege afforded by the Jewish law, of not going out to battle for a year after that interesting event, for in a letter of the Presbytery dated 5th February 1799, it is stated that the visit was not paid till the August previous.

In reference to the Island of Cape Breton, we may mention, that though now included under the government of Nova Scotia, it then formed a distinct colony. Its greatest length is about a hundred miles, and its greatest breadth about eighty, and embraces a surface of about two millions of acres. One of its most remarkable physical features is the Mediterranean Sea, commonly called the Bras d'Or Lake, which occupies so much of the interior. It communicates with the Atlantic by two narrow channels, and spreading irregularly, is broken into almost innumerable bays or creeks of every size and shape, and approaches so nearly to the opposite side of the lake, that a narrow neck of land, little more than a mile in width, is all that separates it from the sea on the other side, thus nearly dividing the island into two.

A large portion of the soil is of the very best quality, and it abounds in coal, and other valuable minerals, while it is favourably situated for commerce and fisheries. Yet at that time its capacities were underrated and its resources were unknown. With the exception of the French Acadians the inhabitants were few. At Sydney there resided the Lieutenant Governor and the various officers of government. A regiment of soldiers was commonly stationed there, and a few emigrants from various quarters had settled around. In other portions of the

island some small settlements had been formed principally of disbanded soldiers and American loyalists, who were chiefly engaged in the fisheries.

We may remark here, that his present visit was undertaken principally at the solicitation of a pious woman, named Janet Sutherland, who had emigrated with her husband and family from the Highlands of Scotland, and who had for years mourned the loss of those religious privileges, which she had enjoyed in her native land. But we must now allow him to tell his own story.

"This summer I performed my long intended voyage to Cape Breton, which proved very troublesome. I had waited in vain, for years, for the opportunity of a passage thither. I, therefore, hired a good boat with three hands, and having laid in plenty of provisions and water, we set off. We had a pleasant sail till we reached Cape George, where we met the wind right ahead. There we anchored all night and part of next day, and then set off for the Gut of Canso, the wind being partly ahead. Next day we sailed pleasantly through the Gut, having a good view of the houses on both sides. I had a great desire to preach to them, but could not stay. We landed at one house which stood close to the shore, where I saw a bad woman, whom I had often exhorted in Pictou. I exhorted her, prayed, and gave her a tract. I could not but admire that Providence which sent me without my knowledge to visit and exhort that woman, about whom I had been much concerned in Pictou. She was very thankful.

"That night we reached St. Peter's, where Mr. Kavanagh lodged us all with great kindness and generosity.* He informed us that our best way to Sydney (the metropolis of Cape Breton) was to haul (about a mile) overland to the Bras d'Or Lake, and sail up the lake till we came to the head of its western branch, about forty miles off, and then walk to Sydney,

* Mr. Kavanagh was a Roman Catholic, and the first member of that persuasion, who ever sat in the Legislature of the Province, Catholic emancipation having been granted in Nova Scotia before it was in the mother country.

which is little more than twenty miles off. 'This,' said he, 'is far shorter than sailing east along the coast of the island, and then working along the east coast till you come to the river, and then up the river to the town.' This was agreeable to the information received before we left Pictou. We agreed to take this short way, and he readily offered us his own oxen to haul our boat across to the Bras d'Or.

"Next morning Mr. Kavanagh directed his man to surround the boat with a strong rope, and hooked the oxen to it. He directed two of my men, one on each side, to hold it on the keel, and his own man to drive the oxen and fetch them back. Thus in a very short time we were fairly launched on Lake Bras d'Or with a fine fair breeze.

"We had imagined that we would meet with a plain landing place at the other end of the lake, and a road leading from it toward Sydney. We took no thought to ask direction of Mr. Kavanagh. When we came so near the head of the lake that it was very narrow and shallow, our eyes were fixed on the shores looking for a landing place, but in vain. We heeled her on her side as far as we could, but had to stop before we could see any landing place or road. We hauled the boat as far ashore as possible, concealed the oars, rudder, and sail, under the bushes from thieves, and hung up our provisions as high as we could in trees, to preserve them from bears and other wild animals, and then composed ourselves for sleep, after worship, in the open air.

"The next day being Sabbath, I was anxious to get up early, hoping to get to town in time to preach. We got up with day light, and one of our company went back by the water side in quest of the road, and the other went up the water side, now a moderate brook, with the same view. He returned in about an hour's time, informing us that he had found a good path, more than a mile farther up the brook. We could not conceive how a path was found so far up the brook, and none leading to it. We waited till the other man returned, who told us that he had seen no vestige of a road. With courage we set off for the

path found by the other, and soon reached it. We went cheerfully along for three miles, when it went into a brook, but did not come out. There was no trace of a road on the other side. We stood amazed for a few seconds, when one said, 'This is an Indian path for carrying their canoes from one brook or river to the other.' At once we understood it to be the case, but it left us more puzzled than ever how to dispose of ourselves.

"We resolved to make another attempt to find a road. A regular ridge of hills rose on each side of the brook. One went up each hill to the top, and one went along the side of the brook, looking to the right and left carefully. I went down the brook side, but soon met with long grass and soft swampy ground, in which I sank deep. I was struck with a sudden fright, lest I should sink irrecoverably, or be bitten by snakes, or unheard-of creatures (water-kelpies), for the long grass concealed danger. I reached a lake, went along the edge of it nearly a mile, and then returned.

"The two men who went up the hill having returned, we all met, and soon found that the least mark of a path had not been seen by any of us. The day was excessively hot, and we were already tired and hungry, without anything to eat, for we had expected to reach a house in time for breakfast.

"The lake puzzled us as completely as the want of a path. Mr. Kavanagh made not the least mention of it. With reluctance we gave up the hope of reaching Sydney by land. We resolved to return to our boat, to sail back twenty miles, then cross to the next prong or branch of the lake, which would carry us out to the sea, and so come to Sydney from the east. Though we were already tired, by travelling through long grass, small entangling bushes, and windfalls, yet we returned to the boat with courage and speed. We found everything as we left them."

We regret that the rest of this interesting account has been lost, but we may explain the circumstances in which they were placed, and the manner in which they were relieved. The place where they had landed was the head of what is now

called St. George's Channel. Deeming it impossible to reach Sydney overland, they, as mentioned, here turned back, and proceeded up the lake twenty miles, and rounding the cape, they passed through what is called the Straits of Barra, and through the little entrance of the Bras d'Or out to sea, and then round the coast into Sydney Harbour, which is six or seven miles to the southward. This harbour stretched a considerable distance into the interior. Four miles from the entrance it divides into two branches, called the North-west and the South-west arms. On the eastern side of the latter and two or three miles above the point of divergence is situated the town of Sydney, established in 1784, when Cape Breton received a separate government and Governor Des Barres was appointed Governor. This arm extends some distance farther up, and at its head receives two rivers or brooks, the northernmost proceeding from a little lake called the Portage Lake. From this the land is low for two or three miles, to a lagune, or, as it is termed in this country from the old French name, a Barrasoi, at the head of St. George's Channel already mentioned. The distance between the two waters is only four or five miles. Now it was here that they had lost their way. They had passed the lagune and the low ground to the lake, and they were almost within sight of the head of the harbour. Indeed they discovered afterward, that they were almost within call of the very people they were going to visit.

He was cordially welcomed among the people by whom he was invited, but we have no particular account of his labours among them. The general results of this visit are stated by the Presbytery as follows: "Partly because so few of them were desirous of the gospel, (the generality being lukewarm,) that they could scarcely support it; and partly because there was no hope of getting their petition granted for a long time, through the backwardness of ministers to come out; and because so many other places were entitled to be supplied before them, they were advised to delay sending home their petition for some time. But had they a minister, there is no reason to

doubt that he would soon form a congregation; for the gospel would be a new thing to them, and through the divine blessing, would run, as it did among the Gentiles at first." On this visit he baptized two children belonging to Janet Sutherland. Being anxious to enjoy the ordinances of religion, she induced her husband to sell his farm and remove to Pictou, that they might be under the ministry of Doctor MacGregor. She lived a consistent life, and her family followed in her footsteps. One of her sons then baptized was the late Wm. Sutherland, afterward for many years an Elder in Doctor MacGregor's congregation in his own lifetime, and that of his successor. The other was the father of the Rev. George Sutherland, Free Church minister at Charlotte Town, Prince Edward Island.

The Miramichi, next to the St. John, is the largest and most important river in the Province of New Brunswick. In two large branches it traverses nearly the whole country, and falls into the Bay of the same name in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. It is navigable more than thirty miles for large vessels, and for barges nearly to its sources. It has since been famous for its large export of timber, and its salmon fishery. The first British settler was a Mr. Davidson, who in the year 1764 emigrated from the North of Scotland, and on the following year obtained a grant of 100,000 acres on the South-west Branch. He was afterwards joined by a Mr. Cort from Aberdeen, and they soon established a valuable trade. During the American Revolutionary war, the place was plundered by the Indians, but it recovered, and at the time of his visit, a population considerable for the time had been collected from various quarters.

In the year 1797 he paid his first visit to Miramichi. He had been applied to as early as the year 1791, but hitherto had not been able to visit them. We are not certain how he went, but it is probable that it was by water. In regard to his visits to this quarter all the information I have been enabled to gather is contained in the following extract of a letter from the Rev. John MacCurdy:

"Many recollect him distinctly, but few can give dates. His

being present at the induction of Mr. Thomson, in 1817, is well remembered. One old lady, Mrs. MacR., remembers his visit in 1797. She and another person speak of a sermon from Isa. lv. 1: 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, &c.,' as having made a deep impression.' They remember his remark on the word, 'Ho,' that it was the cry of one who passed through the streets of the city. Mr. Perley remembers of his coming up from Bay du Vin, in a vessel with two ship-masters, that he called at his house, and that, as they were at the door, the Doctor turned their attention to a field of ripe wheat before them, and said, referring to the drooping heads, 'these were the heaviest, and so they that have most grace, are the most humble.' I suppose that during his last visit he did not itinerate any. But, on the first and second he preached and baptized at Black River, Bay du Vin, and on both sides of the Miramichi, up as far as the point, so called, at the junction of the North and South-west Branches. Those who recollect him remark his happy faculty in introducing religious conversation."

The result of this visit was an application for a minister. Upon this the Presbytery say in their letter already referred to: "Though the people of Miramichi, in New Brunswick, be last in their application, yet they themselves consider their case as so deplorable above others, especially on account of the breaking dispensations they have met with, that they are entitled to be first answered. And, indeed it is hard to deny their claim." One of the "breaking dispensations" here referred to, was the misconduct of an individual bearing the name of a minister, who had been stationed for a time among them.

To meet the demands thus made upon them from these new fields as well as the old, the Presbytery continued to importune the Synod in Scotland. That body showed every desire to meet their wishes. Preachers were appointed to proceed hither, but on one pretext or another, they managed to elude the appointment. Some positively refused, and were even for a time deprived of their license. One of their letters appealing for ministerial help we give in the Appendix, as it will show

the state of the church at that time, and also as it bears internal evidence of its being the composition of Doctor MacGregor.*

In turning to the immediate sphere of his labours, we must now advert to a change that from this period began to pass over its moral and social condition. During the first years of his ministry, we have had to record a great improvement in the state of the people of his charge. But from this time succeeded a period of degeneracy, which continued for a considerable number of years, during which the labours of himself and his brethren in the ministry were one continued struggle against the influx of irreligion and vice. His own account of it is as follows:

"By this time the influence of the war began to reach us, and we indulged a hope, a vain hope, that it would all prove to our advantage. It was so in part. Our government raised a regiment to help it on, and this freed us of almost all the vagabonds and drunken old soldiers, who had lived in Pictou since the peace of 1783, for they all, and they only, enlisted.

"We hoped to profit by an increase of the price of such articles as we could sell; and in this too we partly obtained our desire. Among other things, squared timber came to be in demand; and even this might have been turned to profit had we known to make it in moderation, and for the purpose of obtaining articles really useful; but the love of money did not allow us to stop here. The farmer neglected his farm and went to square timber; the consequence was, that he had to go to the merchant to buy provisions, and the merchant persuaded him that he needed many other things besides provisions. If the farmer scrupled to buy mere superfluities, he would ask him, Why do you hesitate? you know that a stick of timber will pay it. Thus a taste for vanities and expensive living was introduced among us. This answered well enough for a time, but after a few years the price of timber fell, and the taste continued and could not be gratified. A still greater evil was, that the love of grog

* See Appendix E.

was introduced among us. We did not see its evil in time, for the enemy sowed his tares while we were asleep. But after some time it was seen to increase, and spread irresistibly. Many thousand pounds worth of timber have been sold from Pictou, which cost nothing but the making; but it were telling Pictou many thousand pounds that never a stick of it had been made."

This degeneracy began about this period. As early as the year 1797 we find the following drawn up by him, in the name of the Session, and read to the congregation on announcing a day of humiliation:

Pictou, *April 22d*, 1797.

The Session taking under their serious consideration the abounding sinfulness of professors, together with the aspect of Providence towards the world, and especially toward this place, have judged that we have a loud call to the exercise of deep humiliation and earnest prayer.

Ignorance of the Scriptures is a prevailing evil, which is the cause of ignorance of God, of Christ, as to his person, offices, and righteousness, as also of the Holy Spirit, in his renewing and sanctifying work in the soul, and, of course, the cause of much ignorance, carelessness, and wickedness, in our daily practice. People in general are strangers to the faith and love of the Lord Jesus Christ, these powerful motives to holiness of heart and life, and so they are left to a soul-ruining trust in their obedience to a broken covenant of works, which they are daily breaking more and more. People in general are strangers to their guilt by original sin, and to (the) hellish corruption of their whole nature by that guilt, and so their religion does not at all reach the heart, but consists in superficial, outward performances. It is not to be expected that people who are in such a case toward God, should have any true love toward one another, accordingly there is little attention paid to the duties of justice or mercy farther than self-interest leads.

The young generation are growing up in ignorance, vanity, pride, and self-conceit, following all the bad, and little or nothing of the good example of the aged.

The people of this place are particularly guilty of a woful contempt of the gospel, a dreadful stupidity under judgments, a grievous backsliding from reformation attained to, a heinous profanation of the Sabbath day, a breaking of their Baptismal engagements, not giving education to their children, nor endeavouring to bring them up in the fear of God, a growing inclination to the horrible vice of drinking, wasting their means to ruin soul and body, and many other evils which might be mentioned. On these accounts the judgments of God are abroad in the earth. A most ex-

pensive, bloody, and destructive war has been desolating the nations for several years past, and though God has kindly shielded us from its worst effects, we have been neither thankful nor humble. He has, however, made us to feel several strokes of late, though unspeakably lighter than we might expect. The last crop was much blasted, the last winter was uncommonly severe, much cattle have suffered through scarcity, and it is not unlikely that many of the poor may suffer through the ensuing summer Besides these there are grievous spiritual judgments upon us, which few of u feel, as blindness of mind, hardness of heart, unbelief, earthliness of mind, &c. For these and other reasons the Session call all under their inspection to the duty of humiliation and prayer; sorrowing for our sins with a godly sorrow, and drawing near to the throne of grace, for the spirit of grace and supplication to lead us in this and other duties; and particularly to receive the blood of Christ by faith, for pardon and sanctification. And the Session accordingly appoint Thursday, the 27th day of April, to be observed as a day of humiliation and prayer, by all under their inspection."

The above indicates that already he felt the commencement of a change. But the evil grew, and in subsequent years attained a prodigious height. To this we shall have occasion to refer in the sequel. In the meantime the above will show how prompt he was in noticing its commencement, and how earnest he was in sounding the alarm.

As we are tracing the social history of Pictou, we may remark that the year 1799 was distinguished for the first contested election in Pictou, remarkable in itself, but especially in its ultimate results, as the commencement of the party feuds, which have since disturbed the peace of the county. At that time the counties of Halifax, Colchester, and Pictou formed but one county, but in reality the representation had hitherto been in the hands of the town of Halifax, and indeed of the Government officials there. But a feeling was now rising against such subserviency, and the voice of the country was beginning to make itself heard. The present was the first attempt made for the representation of the rural districts of the county, and taking a wider view of the struggle, it was the commencement of an effort to bring popular influence to bear upon the Government. Cottnam Tonge, who for a time made a noise in the Province, said to have been a man of brilliant talents, and an

eloquent speaker, was at that time the leader of the popular party. To contest the county of Halifax, he united with Mr. Mortimer, then the chief man in Pictou, and wielding so much influence as to be called the king of Pictou, and Mr. Fulton, afterward a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, who was an influential man in the district of Colchester. The most noticeable of the nominees of Government was the late Michael Wallace, for a long time treasurer of the Province, a member of the Council, and on two occasions, administrator of the Government, during the absence of the Governor. He was long one of the most influential men in the Province. Indeed no one man had the entire machinery of Government so entirely at his disposal as he had. Such was the state of things then, that it was considered unpardonable presumption for any man in the country to set up as a candidate for what was then the Metropolitan county, particularly in opposition to Government. The result, however, was that, principally from the inhabitants of Colchester and Pictou combining on behalf of Fulton and Mortimer, Wallace suffered a complete defeat. In Pictou, only William MacKay and three or four others voted for him.

From this period Wallace had a most vindictive spirit against Pictou and its leading inhabitants, and those being the days of irresponsible Executive power, he was able to exercise Government influence for their annoyance. He also extended his hostility against our church, of which Mr. Mortimer and the principal inhabitants of Pictou were members, and he continued to encourage MacKay and other dissentients, who gradually formed a party opposed to the leading inhabitants of the district, both in church and state. Thus it is generally considered that the seeds of division were sown at this time, which brought forth their bitter fruits many years after. But to this we shall have occasion to allude in the sequel.

In connection with this election a circumstance may be mentioned indicating the progress of the county. The last day's polling was at the East River, the previous having been at Fisher's Grant, then called Walmesley, where a town had been

laid out. After the last day's polling, the Doctor entertained the candidates and some strangers at dinner, and made for them *a fire of coal.* This was considered quite a novelty, and an important event for the country. It was only the year previous (1798) that coal had been discovered on a brook passing through the rear of his and Wm. MacKay's lots. In that year Wm. Fraser carried a sample to Halifax to the Governor, Sir John Wentworth, who sent him with it to Admiral Sawyer, who ordered a small cargo to be sent to Halifax, which was done, but it did not prove of good quality. The Doctor and some of his neighbours took out licenses from government to dig coal on their own land, and soon after he used them regularly in his house. His pit was on the banks of the brook back of the present mines, about a stone's throw from the bridge on the old road from the Middle River to the East. In the fall of the year he regularly got out his winter's supply, and sometimes sold some. The blacksmiths who had previously burned charcoal, now supplied themselves with coal for their work. Afterward when the mines were leased, these private licenses were all revoked, but it was privately intimated to him that he might dig as much as he liked.

As we have referred to his temporal affairs we may here mention, that shortly after his marriage he obtained a lot of land which he cultivated from that time forward. Considering the manner in which his stipend was paid, as already recorded, and the increase in the price of almost every article of living in subsequent years through the war, we need not wonder that he found this necessary to the subsistence of his family. He did not, however, follow farming as a business in such a way as to neglect the work of the ministry. In no one of its duties did he relax. It has too often been the case in this country, that ministers have made the insufficiency of their support an excuse for neglecting some of their sacred functions—either giving up visiting and catechizing altogether, or giving little attention to their preparation for the pulpit. They have turned to other employments, making the work of the ministry a se-

condary matter, and the result has been to increase the evil complained of—to render the support still more inadequate, and often to leave a congregation to spiritual barrenness, and perhaps to send leanness to the minister's own soul. To the temptation to relax his diligence in the work of the ministry either at home or abroad, by turning aside to other employments, Doctor MacGregor never gave way. He generally employed a man to work his farm, and with the thrifty care of a wife, who, as my informant expressed it, "looked after every thing outside and in," it added but little to his cares. Still, such was the activity of his mind, that he exercised an active superintendence over the operations of the farm, and took an interest in having them conducted in a superior manner. Most of his people at that time managed their farms in a very slovenly and unprofitable manner, but among his other efforts for their welfare, he endeavoured to lead them to improved modes of cultivation. A person told me that he has heard him say from the pulpit, that he felt it his duty to do them good in every way he could. In pursuance of this view he imported agricultural works; in his intercourse with the people he was often found pointing out errors in their system of farming, and suggesting improved modes of culture; and on his own farm he took the lead in agricultural improvement. He endeavoured to secure the services of farm servants, who had been acquainted with the improved systems adopted in the old country, he introduced improved implements, he had the first roller and the first double harrow on the river, and we deem it not unworthy of notice, that, when some years later a Provincial Agricultural Society was formed, he took the first prize for turnips. These things, however, did not divert his mind from his great business. They were but the "side work" of an active mind, whose main efforts were engaged in more important concerns, and they were a sort of relaxation from the sterner cares and more solemn duties of his sacred office.

Referring to himself personally we have only to remark, that from this time forward the improvement in his domestic cir-

cumstances afforded him more favourable opportunities for study. From the time of his arrival he was diligent in this, as far as his circumstances would permit. He did not make his labours in travelling an excuse for neglecting his books, or preaching without preparation. He had as he was able given "attendance to reading," and his sermons, if not written, were the result of much thought. But his frequent absence from home, sometimes for weeks together, was very unfavourable for study. But he was now relieved from the disadvantages under which he had formerly been placed. His congregation was not so scattered. He did not generally need to be from home at night when visiting or catechizing, and his domestic affairs were now so well attended to, as to leave him free from anxiety, and to afford him all requisite outward comfort. These advantages he diligently improved. Returning home from visiting, he would sometimes scarcely wait to warm himself, till he sat down to his reading or his writing. His remote situation precluded him from any minute acquaintance with the literature of the times, or plunging deeply into the lore of the past, yet his diligence was such in availing himself of the means at his disposal, that he accumulated a large amount of general information. And in Theology he gathered a stock of books of the old divinity, good for his circumstances, and by his diligent study of them as well as of the Scriptures, his "profiting appeared unto all."

It may be mentioned to the credit of the parties concerned, that a number of persons in Britain having heard his representations regarding the scarcity of books, got up a respectable subscription for the purchase of such as might be useful to ministers and people. The Rev. Mr. Alice, of Paisley, in one of his letters specially mentions among the contributors, R. Scott Moncrieff, Esq., of Glasgow, Doctors Erskine, Hunter, and Davidson, of Edinburgh, Lady Maxwell, and John Thornton, of London, the latter of whom sent five guineas. Such books as suited ministers were to be retained for the use of members of Presbytery, and the rest were to be distributed

as they might see fit among the people. One letter mentions two boxes besides what had been previously sent. These formed a sort of Congregational Library, and were regularly lent out, and were valuable in diffusing scriptural information among the people. When we say that they were lent out, we do not say that they were always returned, for many are still scattered up and down the country. We may add that one of his Scottish correspondents mentions this as another result of his printed letter.

Of his studies at this time we have a specimen in his Essay on the Millennium, published in the Christian Magazine for the year 1800. This Essay we have deemed well worthy of republication. We believe that it will be found to indicate a mind of considerable power of thought, and a close study of the Scriptures. With all the conclusions the reader may not be disposed to coincide. In his remarks concerning changes of climate, he certainly draws general conclusions, which the few facts adduced will not warrant. Granting that the climate of America has been modified by the clearing away of the forest and the cultivation of the soil, yet this is far from warranting the inference that the climate at the earth's poles will be so moderate, that it will be fit for human habitations, and the soil there capable of cultivation. A closer acquaintance with the physical structure of the globe, would have shown, that there were great natural causes in operation which must for ever prevent such a result, without an entire change in the natural laws by which our planet is governed, nay in the arrangements of the whole solar system. The question of the duration of the Millennium too is one open for discussion.

Yet still in reference to the age to come his conclusions as to its intellectual and spiritual character are just and scriptural, and the whole viewed as the production of one in so secluded a situation, as to be indebted to almost no other aids but his own meditations and the study of the Scriptures, we deem a most creditable production. Two remarks made at the outset will show how clear and accurate were his views as to the interpre-

tation of Scripture. "Indeed the Millennium is so lively an emblem of heaven, that it is not uncommon for both prophets and apostles in their descriptions to slide insensibly from the one into the other, so that sometimes it is difficult to know which of the two they describe." And, again, "In treating of it we need not confine ourselves to those passages of Scripture, which speak directly to the point, because the Millennium being the most prosperous period of the church upon earth, whatever passages will apply to other prosperous periods must apply to this with greater force." In these remarks, if we mistake not, there is indicated an acquaintance with the true structure of prophecy, which anticipates the conclusions of the most learned recent writers on the subject.

In the beginning of the year 1800, he was called to mourn the loss of his aged father. He had long since become so engaged in his work here, as to have no desire to reside in his native country, yet the tenderest feelings of a son and brother went forth to his surviving relatives. None of his letters to them are preserved, but the recollections of those who heard them point them out as characterised by deep affection for his friends, sympathy with them in their trials, and full of Christian advice and consolation. As his circumstances improved, too, he gave more substantial tokens of his sympathy by sending means to add to the comforts of his declining years. Thus a letter of Mr. Barlas acknowledges the receipt of £9 for his father.

His letters also contained full particulars of his circumstances here, and we need not say were received by his relatives and acquaintances, with great interest. The details, regarding a state of things so entirely new to them,—his trials and successes—were all read with eager curiosity. They were circulated from house to house, among friends and neighbours, and they were read and talked over at the Christian Fellowship meeting. His father particularly rejoiced at hearing of the success of the Gospel, and though feeling the separation, considered himself amply rewarded by hearing of his son being the means of advancing the

honour of Christ in this distant land. Thus as early as 1788, he writes to his son under date,—April 7th, as follows:

"I was refreshed to hear from the Rev. Mr. Barlas' letter, of your ministry having some apparent success. I would be glad to hear something particularly from yourself, as nothing would be more satisfactory to me, nor such a compensation for the loss of you, as to hear that you would be instrumental in spreading the fame of our glorious Redeemer, in the dark places of the earth, and a people formed for praising him; and as the Lord in his adorable sovereignty has called you to a dispensation of ordinances in that place, faint not nor be discouraged at trials that may be in your way, for the Lord has the management of all in his own hand. So look to him for grace to trust in him, for grace and strength for the work he has called you to, and 'as thy day, thy strength shall be.'"

Mr. Gilfillan, in a letter of December 8th, 1794, says, "Every week seemed a month to your father, at the time he used to receive letters from you. He reckons it his principal earthly comfort to hear of your welfare, and of the success of the Gospel in those parts where you live. I cannot describe his joy to you. The tears start in his eyes, and his face glistens when he hears from you." And a relative in writing says, that he was revived in hearing of his success, as was Jacob on hearing that his son was yet alive.

His letters to his son contain many enquiries regarding this country and its people, and his labours among them, and among other things express a strong desire that he should again visit his native land, with a natural anxiety of a parent, urging this particularly, that he might get some virtuous woman for a wife.

For some time he had felt the infirmities of age increasing upon him. He, however continued to attend the house of God till the beginning of the winter in which he died, where, on a seat prepared for him in front of the precentor's desk, on account of his being dull of hearing, he listened with eagerness to the word of life. He also regularly attended the Fellowship

meeting. He also continued his visits to read religious books to his neighbours. Having a premonition of his approaching end, he shortly before his death went round among them to give them his last, and as it proved his dying advice. A nephew, in writing to the Doctor an account of his decease, says, "About two nights before he died he was in James MacFarlane's house till nine o'clock at night, with the Christian Magazine, where there was a discourse, by yourself from Nova Scotia, on the Millennium, which we all liked well. He endeavoured to keep the Fellowship meeting with us as often as he could."

On the first Sabbath of the year and of this century, on his grand-daughter, who waited upon him, returning from public worship, he asked what was Mr. Gilfillan's text? She told him, "When a few years are come I shall go the way whence I shall not return." "Well," said he, "I have not years to live, nor months, nor weeks, only a few days." On the Tuesday following he took his candle, which he usually carried with him when he went out reading, lest they should grudge him a light, and proceeded to a neighbour's house. On his leaving, she asked him if she would go and bring him home. He replied, "James will surely come home with me the night, for it is the last." The evening was spent partly, at least, in efforts for the conversion of a Roman Catholic, who had married a daughter of James MacFarlane, a friend of his just alluded to. His neighbour came home with him to the door, and left him to lift the latch, but ere the door was opened he had fallen down, and was carried to bed insensible. He revived the following day, but died on Saturday. During these few days he conversed with his friends, but was most of his time engaged in prayer, and repeating passages of Scripture. When asked if they would send for Mr. Gilfillan, he replied, "No, he will be studying, and I do not wish the Lord's work to be interrupted. Send him word that I am a dying man, and he can remember me at a throne of grace, as well there as here." One asked him if he had any thing to trust to. He replied, "Yes, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he will stand at the latter day

upon the earth." He asked a friend to read the 119th Psalm. He said that he had got forty passages out of that psalm to comfort him during the preceding night. Thus, amid exercises which showed how much his mind had already imbibed the spirit of that better world into which he was about to enter, he fell asleep in Jesus on the 8th of January, 1801; aged 84 years, and upward. The writer visited Comrie and Lochearne, in September, 1847, and found that, at the distance of nearly half a century, his memory was still fragrant.

His life suggests many useful reflections. Especially, it illustrates the remarkable manner in which God orders events in his Providence, both with reference to individuals and the interests of the church; and also how much good an individual of sincere piety, though in an humble station, may be able to accomplish.

The years following exhibit the same course of labour at home and abroad as in the past. In the year 1800 he visited Prince Edward Island, but we have gained no particulars regarding his visit. The only memorial of this year we possess is the following short letter to an old acquaintance, who had emigrated to Philadelphia:

LETTER TO MR. WILLIAM YOUNG.

Pictou, *July* 18*th*, 1800.

Dear Sir:—I was once a companion of yours at Alloa, under the name of James Drummond MacGregor. I do not recollect now whether I knew of your emigration to America before my own emigration, but I am certain that I was here a number of years without minding that such a man had ever been; and this would still be the case I believe, if I had not chanced to see your name on the title page of a book, which made me recollect an old acquaintance. This was several years ago. Since then I had some faint desires of writing to you, but now having an opportunity of Mr. Andrew MacAra carrying a letter to you, my desire is strong enough to move my fingers to write. I have little else to say to you, but that I have an affectionate remembrance of you, though I hope not to see you in this world. How strange the dispensations of Providence! You and I left Scotland and came to the parish of America, but there are never likely to meet. What puny reptiles are we to live on one continent and never to meet!

I have been living in this Province very near fourteen years: almost ten of these I was without wife or fellow labourer in my work; about five

years ago two other ministers came out to help me, which have been a great comfort to me. About four years ago I married, and have now two children; these also are comforts. Here we live in a manner out of the world. I would not care for being out of the bustling world, but I am much excluded out of the religious world. I have hardly seen a dozen of clergymen, since I came to this Province, and were it not for the Christian Magazine, I would hardly know any thing done at a distance in the Church.

I beg you will be good enough to write me, and let me know how you fare, and what family you have, and any thing else you may think suitable. You may expect my next letter to be longer. Is there no way for me to get the Appendix to Gib's Contemplations, published in Philadelphia? You may send my letter to the care of Mr. John MacKenzie, cabinet maker, Halifax. Wishing you the favour and love of Jesus Christ.

I am, Dear Sir, Yours, &c.,

JAMES MACGREGOR.

From the minutes of Presbytery which began to be recorded in the year 1801, we learn that he was appointed in the latter year to Amherst for three Sabbaths, and from a subsequent minute of Presbytery in which he reports the settlement of a case of some difficulty in the congregation, it appears that the appointment was fulfilled.

In the year following (1802) the brethren were delighted by the accession to their number of the Rev. Alexander Dick, who arrived about midsummer to share their labours and trials. He had been a carpenter, but moved by the earnest entreaties of Doctor MacGregor for some to go to his assistance, he devoted himself to study with a view to coming to Nova Scotia. He was a man of warm temperament, and from the time of his entering upon his studies a perfect enthusiast in regard to missions to America. He was possessed of good talents, and in his preaching had a very earnest and singularly attractive manner, so that of the early Presbyterian ministers of this Province he was, with the exception of Doctor MacGregor, the most popular. He was also a man of most amiable disposition, so that he was universally beloved, while a vein of humour added to the pleasure of his society. In view of all these circumstances, his arrival gave great pleasure to the brethren, not only as affording supply for one of the destitute fields, but as affording them

the addition to their fellowship of "a brother beloved." On his arrival he preached for a time in Prince Edward Island, and in several places in Nova Scotia. In the fall of 1802 he was called to the congregation of Douglas, as it was then called. It embraced not only Maitland and Noel, but a large extent of country back, including Nine Mile River, the upper part of the Shubenacadie and Gay's River. In describing it afterward he said, "It is little short of sixty miles long, and the breadth has never been ascertained. Instead of a congregation it might with more propriety be called a shire."

His ordination however did not take place till the following year. On this occasion Doctor MacGregor preached the ordination sermon and delivered the charge both to the minister and people, while Mr. Ross preached the evening sermon. We may mention that in those days an ordination was both a novelty and a matter of wide spread interest; and this, as *the first Presbyterian ordination* in the Province, was a matter of special interest to the brethren, and of great delight to the people, many of whom were pious, and had long sighed at the remembrance of the privileges they had enjoyed in other lands, and longed for the time when their eye should see their teacher.

After the ordination, the members of Presbytery being together in the house of Mr. Ellis, the Doctor said to him, that they ought to be very thankful to the Presbytery for having brought them a good minister. "Oh," said Mr. E., "we deserve a good minister." "You deserve *Hell*," was the Doctor's reply.

We should add here that in the year 1800 the Rev. Mr. Urquhart came to Princetown, where he continued for about two years. He was originally from the Established Church of Scotland, and came by the way of the United States. He was a sound and interesting preacher of the doctrines of grace, but for some circumstances, of the nature of which we are ignorant, and into which we care not to enquire, he never presented his certificates, so that he was not recognized by the Presbytery; but he relieved them for the time from supplying Princetown and the adjacent settlements.

CHAPTER XVI

FROM THE ARRIVAL OF MR. DICK, TO THE ARRIVAL OF MR. GORDON.—1803–1806.

"And they went forth and preached every where,—the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following."—Mark xvi. 20.

DURING the year 1803 the Presbytery received another accession to their number in the person of one whose name was afterward to be a prominent one in this Province; we allude to the late Doctor MacCulloch. In the expectation of his arrival the Presbytery had appointed him to Prince Edward Island, but it was so late in the season when he arrived, that it was deemed imprudent to proceed thither that autumn, or he was unable to do so. He was engaged to supply the congregation of the Harbour of Pictou, till spring. But before winter was over the people there gave him a call, which being accepted, he was inducted as their minister, on the 6th of June, 1804. This settlement relieved the ministers of Pictou of part of their home labours, but left the destitute localities to which they had been giving missionary supply in the same position as before.

During the years 1802–'3–'4, part of his time was as usual devoted to missionary excursions. In the year 1802 it appears from the minutes of Presbytery, that he was appointed for three Sabbaths to Douglas. In the year 1803, he mentions in his narrative, hereafter to be given, that it was on his return from a missionary excursion that he found a vessel at the beeches,* with Doctor MacCulloch on board. Where he had been on this

* At the entrance of Pictou Harbour.

occasion we are uncertain. In the year 1802, and again in 1804, he was sent on a mission to Prince Edward Island; on the former occasion for three Sabbaths, and on the latter for five These visits are so blended with a number in subsequent years, and with the visits of other ministers, in the recollection of those who enjoyed them, that we cannot give an exact account of each; but we may mention the general course of his visits, and record such incidents as we have been able to glean regarding them. Sometimes he obtained a passage to Bedeque, and proceeded from the west to the eastern parts of the Island, and sometimes he obtained a passage to Charlotte Town; but, perhaps, more frequently he was landed at the eastern part of the Island, principally at George Town. From this place he travelled by Bay Fortune to St. Peters, thence to Cove Head, Cavendish, Princetown, Bedeque, sometimes as far as Lot 16, on the western side of Richmond Bay. Sometimes he got a passage home from Bedeque, but frequently he returned by the eastern part of the Island, visiting, on his route, such places as Tryon, West River, Charlotte Town, and Wood Islands, now called Woodville. The people of the latter place on several occasions took him home in a boat.

On these visits his mode of procedure was as we have described it in Chapter XI. The following additional incidents may throw some additional light on his labours. On one occasion, at Princetown, he found a man and his wife who were not living in great harmony, and who had come to the conclusion that the reason was that they had been married by a magistrate. They applied to him to marry them over again. He made them stand up before him on the floor, and gave them an address on their duties; concluding by saying that he hoped they would now live peaceably together, that he had now married them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, but he believed that before they had been married in the name of the Devil. It is stated that they lived happily together during the remainder of their lives.

Many of the people were very ignorant in religious things.

One man with whom he was conversing, could not be persuaded that he had a bad heart, or that he was at all such a character as the Doctor was accustomed to describe men in their natural state. In the course of reasoning with him the Doctor said, "Have you never told lies?" "May-be I have, sometimes." "Then you are a child of the Devil. He is the father of all liars." The man became very indignant, and afterward would scarcely go to hear him preach. On another occasion in the course of a sermon, speaking of divine truth as a closely connected system, he said that it was like a chain, if one of its links were broken it would be useless. One of his hearers said afterward, that that was not true, as the two parts might afterward be united.

On one visit, preaching at St. Peters in a private house, a woman, who had a child that was troublesome, put her hand up to the mantel-piece, feeling for something to amuse it, but brought down a pack of cards, scattering over the floor. The woman commenced picking them all up and putting them in the fire, while he went on with the sermon, without saying a single word on the subject, or giving any indication that he had noticed what transpired.

On another visit to St. Peters, a daughter of his host, Mr. MacEwan, was married, and in deference to him there was no dancing. He remarked that "such were the weddings he liked best,—in which he was piper himself." We do not mean by this to have it appear that he frowned upon amusement on such occasions. We refer to it for the purpose of noticing the fact, that at that time marriages were most commonly celebrated by magistrates, who received authority from the Government for that purpose. From there being so few ministers in the country at that time, some such arrangement was necessary. The early Presbyterian ministers generally performed the service in their own congregations after proclamation of the banns on three successive Sabbaths, according to Scottish practice.

The following remarkable incident I have heard from more than one person who had it from the Doctor's own lips. It

probably occurred on one of these trips. He was staying at the house of Mr. William Douglass, St. Peters, then, or afterward an Elder. When the family on Saturday night or Sabbath morning, were assembled for family worship, he asked if all about the house were present. The reply was, all except an Englishman, who did not care for the service. "Oh," said the Doctor, "bring him in, *he has a soul to be saved.*" When worship was over, the Doctor entered into conversation, and found him to have been a man-of-war sailor. Having heard from what part of England the man was from, the Doctor asked if they had any good ministers there? He replied, "We had a Mr. Romaine, where I lived." "Indeed," said the Doctor, "did you know Mr. Romaine?" "Yes, my father was a member of the church. Did *you* know him?" the man asked in return. "No," said the Doctor, "but I know his writings. Have you any of them?" "Yes, I have one that my father put in my trunk, when I first went to sea." On the Doctor asking to see it, the man brought it forth. It was one of Romaine's works on faith. A conversation then ensued, to the following effect, "I think that you have been well brought up." "Yes," said the man, "my father was a good man and taught me well." "I am afraid," said the Doctor, "that you have not profited much by your early instruction." The man assented. "Going on board a man-of-war did not do you much good?" The man confessed with shame, how irregular had been his life there. "And is it not time that you were beginning to think seriously about your past life and a future world?" The man professed humbly to feel that it was so. "Then come and hear me preach, and see if I preach like Mr. Romaine." The man did so. On returning, the Doctor asked, "Do I preach like Mr. Romaine?" "Yes," replied the man, "you do. I have heard from you to day some of the same things that I used to hear from Mr. Romaine." The Doctor continued to ply him with warning, instruction, and encouragement, and the result was that he became a sincerely pious man, and an active and useful member of the church. When the late Rev. Peter Gordon was settled

in St. Peters he became an Elder, and Mr. Gordon stated to a minister on a visit to that quarter, that he was the most active in the congregation.

We cannot forbear some reflections upon this incident. How remarkably does God in his Providence order events for bringing his chosen into his fold! How strange that an individual should be spared through a life of sin, amid battle and shipwreck, and his steps guided to meet in what then might be called our western wilderness, far from the land of his birth, the travelling missionary, who should be honoured of God to lead him in the way of peace! This incident also shows the propriety of ministers embracing the opportunities which may be afforded them, in the private intercourse of life, to deal faithfully with individuals regarding their great concern. It warns us also against despising any man. "Honour all men," is the injunction of Scripture, and there is no man beneath the notice of the minister of religion. "He has a soul to be saved," a frequent remark of Doctor MacGregor's, conveys a truth of solemn and awful importance. Some of those whom we may lightly esteem, may be "chosen vessels unto him." We also see the benefit of early parental training. The seed of divine truth early sown in the young heart may long lie dormant, and may seem to have perished for ever; yet favouring circumstances in the Providence of God may, through the influence of the Divine Spirit, cause it yet to germinate and to bear fruit unto life eternal. We know not the circumstances in which it may appear. Little did the parents of the last individual, when they saw their son enter the navy and pursue a course of sin, imagine that the good seed which they had sown should spring up in what was then the wilds of Prince Edward Island. How strikingly does this illustrate the divine saying, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days!"

We shall insert here one or two letters, which belong to this period:

LETTER TO WILLIAM YOUNG, PHILADELPHIA.

Dear Sir :—It is about two years since I had your letter with Mr. Gib's Appendix. I can assure you your letter gave me the sincerest pleasure. The kindness of Providence to you in giving you such a portion of the good things of this life, as to enable you to give such education to your children, and especially in giving you children on which the means of education are so well bestowed, should be remembered with the most lively gratitude. What a mercy to have children that grow in understanding as in years, and are a pleasure instead of a cross to their parents! God has also visited you with trouble and death. I hope you see his kindness in this as well as the other. The best of us would forget God in uninterrupted prosperity. In mercy he puts bitter things into our cup. But, alas! how often do we misconstrue his kindness.

I have got a wife and three children, a girl and two boys. The girl is only learning to read, and the oldest boy his letters. I have now the happiness to inform you that I have got three fellow labourers in the work of the ministry in this wilderness. I was nine years in this country without ever seeing a minister or preacher belonging to the Synod. Judge what a pleasure I now enjoy in having so many companions. They are all, I hope, men of piety and zeal, and willing to be partakers of the afflictions of the gospel. The inconveniences of ministers are considerably great here on account of the uncultivated state of the country, and the thinness of population, which makes the congregations very extensive. We have also the agreeable expectation of one or two more ministers this fall, which will be a farther strengthening of our hands. As to the success of the gospel among us, I cannot say much, only we do not labour in vain. We have chiefly to contend with Arminians, that is, Methodists. There are a few Universalists among us, occasioned by one or two copies of Winchester on the Universal Restoration, and Scarlett's New Testament. I hear there is an Emmons who has written against the Universalists, I believe you could get it in Philadelphia, and I would esteem it a great favour if you would be kind enough to send it to me, to the care of Mr. Daniel Fraser, Merchant, Halifax. We lie under great difficulties in getting books here, as our commerce with the States is restrained, and the people in general have but little taste for books. I shall hope for a line upon your receipt of this, and I shall be happy to hear how you are prospering in soul and body, as also to answer any questions concerning this part of the world as far as my information extends.

I am, Dear Sir, Yours, &c.,

James MacGregor.

Pictou, *August* 11*th*, 1803.

P. S. I had almost forgot a principal design of this letter. There is a report here that Tom Paine is converted, is a Presbyterian, keeps worship twice a day, and lives a sober life. It is said that this is published in the American papers. If it be true, you must know it. Pray, fail not to communicate the agreeable news, if true. It will give pleasure to many.

To an aunt of his wife, residing at Inverness, without date, but written either in 1805 or the beginning of 1806:

Dear Madam:—Though I did not write to you last year, yet your letter of the 12th of July, 1804, I received in due time. In that letter you have great complaints of your want of submission to God's dispensations, and of the deceivings of your heart. Very likely the same complaint still continues, and I suspect it will continue all your life. It would be a very strange thing to see a Christian in this world that had no remains of sin or corrupt nature to complain of; but I think it would be far stranger to see a Christian in this world, whose grace lived in perfect harmony with his corrupt nature, so as to have no complaint of it. No; we are not to get quit of sin nor yet to agree with it, while we have breath. But we must live and die warring against it, against ourselves, for it is ourselves. We must take no rest, for every minute's rest on our part is so much victory to the enemy. Though we are sure of the victory at last, we must not expect it complete till death. Romaine's Walk of Faith (Line obliterated) * * * *

I had lately a letter from James Forbes, and it is the only letter I had from him since his arrival in Demerara. It is very seldom there is an opportunity for letters between here and there. He says he had a good deal of sickness there at first, but that now he enjoys good health. My sister-in-law, Mrs. Fraser, had a letter from Hannah Heywood. She says the family is in Demerara and is well, but Mr. Heywood himself is at St. Kitts. What a great burden and trouble are riches! They will not let a man live with his wife and family. It is very seldom that a poor cottarman is deprived, by his poverty, of the comfort of living at home with his wife and children. He however is not without his trials. "Lord, give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me." Hannah's letter says, that James Forbes intends to return home after a year or two with a small fortune. A vain intention indeed! How many have made the same resolution, but could never put it in execution! Every man promises to be content with a little fortune while he has it not, but as soon as he gets it, it is nothing, and it requires more to make a little fortune, till old age or death comes. Besides how many drop off especially in the unhealthy climate of Demerara, and the West Indies, before a year or two run their round! Alas! few have the wisdom to know they have enough. Fortune hunters are among the chief of fools.

I have not much news to tell you from this place. We are all in health. Mr. Fraser and sister-in-law Catherine left Halifax and came to Pictou this last summer. There is none of us at all in Halifax now. But though we are all in Pictou we do not live all close together, for Pictou is bigger than some shires in Scotland. Father-in-law and I live close together. John, my brother-in-law, and Mr. Fraser live close together, where there is something of a town, and which is increasing fast, about nine miles distant from my house to the north. Mr. Graham and your sister Betsey live

about a mile and a half or two miles south-east from John's and Mrs. Fraser's. We all live by the water side, and boats are going always backward and forwards, so that we can easily go and see one another; yet when we have no particular business, we are oftentimes a long while without seeing one another. To give you some idea of our situation, father-in-law and I live at the head of the tide, eight miles up a river which runs north somewhat like as if we lived eight miles up the Ness. John and Mr. Fraser are as if they were on (the north) side of the frith at the Ferry of Kessock, and Mr. Graham as if he were a piece east from Inverness along the shore. We are all in comfortable circumstances each upon his own (property). But death will be here by and by, and remove us from our dwellings. And we know not which of us will get the summons first. I fear that some of us, instead of preparing for death, are striking their roots deeper and deeper in this earth, as if there were never to be a removal. This is a great evil. What a terrible amazement will Death, Judgment, and Eternity bring upon such! To be pluckt in a moment from every thing the heart is set upon, to undergo pure and unmixed wrath, for ever and ever. Lord Jesus, may we be found in thee, and in thy righteousness, and we shall be safe.

I remain, Dear Madam, Yours, &c.,

James MacGregor.

Having now to describe a journey through a large portion of the Province of New Brunswick, one quarter of which he had formerly visited, and other sections of which he afterward traversed, we may here give a brief account of the colony.

This Province lies between Nova Scotia and Lower Canada, having the State of Maine on the one side and the Gulf of St. Lawrence on the other. It forms a kind of irregular square, lying between 45° 5′ and 48° 4′ north latitude, and embraces an area of over 26,000 square miles, or about 17,000,000 acres. It is not so much indented by deep bays as Nova Scotia, and it therefore is not so entirely maritime. But its coast is extensive, and is well adapted both for commerce and fisheries. But it is particularly distinguished by its noble rivers. Of these the principal is the St. John, which rises far beyond the boundary of the Province. For eighty-five miles up it can be used by vessels of fifty tons, thence small vessels of twenty tons can ascend to the Grand Falls, about one hundred and twenty miles higher, above which it is only fitted for boats. Next in importance is the Miramichi, to which we have formerly referred.

The soil in most parts of the Province is of the highest degree of fertility.

Till the year 1784 New Brunswick formed part of the Government of Nova Scotia. The French had settled various places during their occupancy of the country, but the first British settlement was made in the year 1762, by a number of families from Massachusetts, who obtained a large grant of land on the St. John River, in what is now the county of Sunbury. It was, we believe, to visit a portion of these people that he took his present journey. The Province, however, made but little progress till the year 1784, when a large number of loyalists arrived, who laid the foundations of its prosperity. These were such as we have described them in Nova Scotia, some of them disbanded soldiers, whose habits rendered them ill adapted to contend with the difficulties of a settlement in a new country. But others were sober, industrious, and enterprising.

In the year 1805, in answer to a petition from Sheffield in New Brunswick, he performed one of his longest and most interesting missionary journeys, viz., up the St. John River in that Province. We have the last part of his own account of it preserved, though he sets it down for the year 1803. We shall supply such information as we have been able to gather regarding the first part of it. He travelled on horseback, taking his own horse, which members of his family recollect as a very sagacious animal—one particularly that would follow a track with great sagacity, or a road that it had once travelled. His course led him by Amherst where he lodged with the Rev. Mr. Mitchell, then labouring there, from whom he received direction as to his route. The next day he started for the Bend of Peticodiac. Here he met with an incident, which he used afterward to relate as an example of the power of prayer. In the afternoon having got off his horse for some purpose, when he was ready to mount he could not find the animal. He looked about but could see no sign of him. The road being through the woods and covered with moss or leaves, it left no track. He concluded that it must have gone on. He therefore pro-

ceeded on a distance, as he judged, of a mile and a half, till he came to a wet place where the horse if he had passed must have left a track. There being none he turned and walked back to the place where he had lost him, and still could discover no trace of the animal. He was now reduced to extremity—at a distance from a house, his horse in all likelihood lost in the woods, and darkness was coming on. He used to relate his thoughts at the moment. He had left home rather against the wishes of the Session, and he began to think that Providence was frowning upon his undertaking; but then again he concluded that it was occasioned by his old enemy, that Satan was playing him this trick to hinder him. In his extremity, all other means failing, he resorted to prayer. Kneeling down he besought his heavenly Father to relieve him from his difficulty. *When he opened his eyes at the conclusion of his prayer the horse was in sight.*

Shortly after, he had a remarkable preservation of his life. It having grown very dark he had to allow the animal to take his own course. In a little he saw a glimmering appearance at one side of him, which he could not understand, but he allowed his horse to keep on his way. In a short time he reached a house; but what was his surprise to discover afterward that the horse had walked along steadily on the top of a mill-dam, where a false step on one side would have plunged him into the water, or on the other, have given a most dangerous if not fatal fall!

When he reached the Kennebeckasis he met with an incident somewhat remarkable. To the perils of various kinds to which he had been subjected during his ministerial life, there were now to be added "perils of robbers." There resided an Irishman here, but by Mr. Mitchell he had been dissuaded from staying there, but recommended to go some miles farther on to the house of a Scotchman. It had got so late, however, that he felt it necessary to stay at the house of the former. He was put to sleep in a kind of out-building, attached to the main one. He lay down, and fell asleep, but he could scarcely have been

long asleep when something causing him to start up, to his surprise he found a man in the room with him. The latter by way of apology said that he was afraid that he (the Doctor) would be afraid to be alone. "I am not alone, my Master is with me." The man went out, but the Doctor did not sleep much for the rest of the night. When it was day, he mounted his horse and rode off. As he came to the house of the Scotchman he met the latter at his gate. After exchanging salutations and making himself known, the latter enquired, "Where were you last night?" "At ——," replied the Doctor, naming the Irishman. "Well, the straps of your saddle-bags are cut, and it is a mercy it was not your throat." It was, no doubt, the intention of the man to have robbed his saddle-bags, and he had commenced cutting into them, when he was interrupted by the Doctor's starting from his sleep. The mark of his knife was seen upon the heels of the Doctor's boot, which was stowed in the saddle-bags. Probably he had been seized with some sudden fear, and did not return to complete his work.

After leaving the Kennebeckasis, he had to go a long distance through the woods, where the road was a mere path, and it at length got so dark that he could see nothing indicative of a road, but an opening in the woods between the tops of the trees. Coming upon a house he staid to enquire the way. The man of the house was from home, and his wife was not very willing to admit him. He used to relate with great zest the colloquy that ensued, something to the following effect:

Woman. "Who are you?"

Doctor. "I am James MacGregor, a minister from Pictou."

Woman. "Are you a Methodist?"

Doctor. "No."

Woman. "Are you Church of England?"

Doctor. "No."

Woman. "Then you must be a New Light?"

Doctor. "No, I am not a New Light, either.

Woman. "Then what in all the world are you, for I do not know any more?"

Doctor. "I am a Presbyterian."

Woman. "Well, I never saw a Presbyterian minister before, but my mother used to tell me that they were the very best in the world. But what do you hold to?"

Doctor. "I do not understand what you mean."

Woman. "Do you hold to conversion?"

Doctor. "Don't they all hold to conversion?"

Woman. "Now, the Methodists and New Lights hold to it, but the Church of England hold against it."

Having thus got all her enquiries satisfactorily answered, she treated him very kindly, giving him all necessary directions regarding his way, and inviting him to lodge with her on his return.

The part of his narrative preserved, commences with his journeying on the following day.

". . . . when I came in sight of a beautiful lake, like one of the Highland lakes which I had seen at home. Like them, it was partly skirted with beautiful woods, and partly with pasture and corn-fields. This pretty lake was merely an expansion of the River St. John, but the river was quite out of view. I lodged all night with a farmer who lived in this charming retreat; he was a Presbyterian, but had no minister, and few of his persuasion near him. This kind man invited me to stay a night with him on my return; and on parting, directed me that, after three miles of a low thick wood, I would come in sight of the river, which would guide me all the rest of the way.

"I soon got through this road, and then I saw a beautiful sweep of the noble River St. John, and large tracts of clear land. I soon came forward to a fence, which directly crossed the road, and I saw a rich crop of hay within the fence. I was surprised, for I noticed no other road; but I concluded that my admiration of the majesty of the river had prevented me from noticing where the road had struck off. Accordingly I turned to the right, along the side of the fence, and rode along a considerable way without seeing any appearance of a road.

At last I met a man, of whom I enquired. He told me I had left the road behind me, and was leaving it farther and farther every step. I asked him if that was it that was stopped by a fence. He replied that it was. I asked him how they came to build a fence across the road. He said it was to save them the trouble of a fence on each side of the road. 'But how are travellers pleased to have the road stopped?' 'The travellers by land are not many, for most of the travelling is by water. There are boats often between St. John and Fredericton.' When we reached the road he took down the fence-poles, and when I crossed them put them up again, and bade me farewell. I could easily trace the road through hay-ground till I passed it. I had now an excellent road along the side of the St. John's River, skirted with small bushes and tall trees, till the end of my journey. Every farmer had his house on the road side farthest from the river, with a broad and fertile intervale behind.

"Riding along, I came to a man carrying two pails of water from the river, of whom I asked, how far it was to Squire Burpe's? (to whom I had been directed). He answered, 'A few miles,' and asked if I was a minister. I said I was. He asked if I was from Pictou. I said, 'Yes.' He said, 'You must be the minister that we sent for.' I said, 'They did send for me.' 'Well,' said he, 'we sent for you by the desire of Mr. S——, and he has since run off with another man's wife.' 'Mr. S——,' said I, 'has done a very evil thing, but his misconduct cannot prevent the grace of God from doing good to you and me.' 'I do not tell you of him in the way of reflection, but purely of information.'

"After riding nearly another hour along this beautiful level I reached Squire Burpe's house, the end of my journey, for which it became me to be especially thankful.* I was received and entertained kindly by the squire and his whole family, all the time I continued there. I directed him to spread word that I had come. He told me he had done so. He informed

* This was at Sheffield.

me they were a colony from New England, and that, of course, they were Congregationalists in their religious profession. I told him I had long wished to see one of their congregations, and hoped that their congregation would be a fair sample of a New England Church. He said, 'I am afraid that we are degenerated.' 'I have heard much of the piety and sufferings of the New Englanders, and I will count myself paid for my troublesome journey, in seeing a fair sample of their religion.' 'And I am as anxious to hear a Presbyterian, for I have read of the persecutions they have suffered. The doctrines of grace and salvation are the same everywhere, and in all generations, though every one has his own way of handling them.'

"I preached two Sabbaths to them in a respectable place of worship, and to Methodists and Baptists. They heard with apparent attention and satisfaction. Many of them stayed and conversed a good while after public worship was over. On returning to Mr. Burpe's I saw a woman, who said she came from Perthshire many years ago, and had never heard a Presbyterian sermon since she came, till that day. She hoped I would be so good as preach her a sermon or two at her house on a week-day. I said I certainly would be very happy to do so. We agreed on the day, and she promised to send a man and a horse for me. At Squire Burpe's we employed the time in religious conversation, partly on the sermons, and partly on other topics.

"On Monday I visited some of the neighbouring families, and the river, a delightful and grand object. Though it was very low, not reaching half-way up its banks, yet to me it appeared extremely large and grand. I was told that in the time of the spring freshets it overflows all its banks, and covers that whole intervale, two miles broad, in some places two or three feet deep. During that time every house and barn is an island; the potatoes, and other things that may be injured by water, must be carried up to the garret. Every house has a canoe for sailing into the barn or byre, or neighbour's house. The fence-poles on the lowest grounds are collected into heaps and laid in

a safe place. But sometimes the freshet rises higher than expectation, and carries off the fences that were thought free of danger. Then the farmers are seen in their canoes, and their servants up to their breasts, going after their fence-poles; and sometimes they lose them after all.

"I was informed that the use of the beautiful row of trees along the river-side was to prevent the ice from spreading over the intervale and destroying houses, cattle, &c.* When the spring melts the snow everywhere, the streams and little brooks break their ice and carry it before them to larger brooks and smaller rivers which carry it forward with accumulating force. The resistless fury of a thousand streams, and the ice carried with them, drive before them the ice of the great river itself, with reiterated and irresistible crashes. This ice is chiefly carried down the main stream; but some of it would break out here and there with incredible fury; but the trees serve as a barrier against it.

"Next day the man came for me to go where I had promised to preach. When we reached the house, the man and his wife came out to welcome me in. We soon inquired whence each other came. He told me he came from Clocky Mill, near Gask. I was astonished, remembering instantly that when I was a young lad at Kinkell, at the grammar school, I heard much talk of the miller of Clocky Mill going to America. I told them this, and at once we became great friends. We admired the Providence that orders all our lots. I began to think that God had other designs in sending me here than preaching to the Congregationalists. I preached to two or three families with uncommon life and earnestness, as my meeting with this family was unexpected and providential.

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* This mode of planting trees along the edges of intervale and marsh lands, was first introduced into the lower colonies by the French; and the object seems to have been to preserve the soil, by retaining it by the roots, and to prevent the encroachment of the sea. The tree principally employed was the willow, and by them it is supposed to have been introduced into Nova Scotia, where it is very common in the older settlements.

"Next morning I took a view of his farm. It was large, and in good order. The land seemed good all around the lake, and almost wholly unsettled. A beautiful river flowed for three or four miles from it, with scarcely any fall, into the St. John, so that the tide of the St. John reached the upper end of the lake. After breakfast I returned to Mr. Burpe's, reflecting on the wonderful disposals of Divine Providence in ordering and changing the lots of men in this world. Next day I crossed the river, to see one or two families who had invited me, and one who had promised to take a jaunt up the river with me. I was informed of a number of the New England settlers, who, being discontented with the fine intervale, on account of the trouble and danger of its freshets, had moved twenty miles up the river, and settled there on land high and dry, though not so rich.* I was requested to visit them, and I was desirous to go. I saw this gentleman, who was willing to set off with me next Monday. I found him a pious and agreeable companion.

"On Monday we went, and reached the place that night. I preached on a week-day and on the Sabbath, and visited and conversed on other days, pressing them to live by faith on the Son of God, and obey by faith. They were destitute of public ordinances, and were plainly the poorer for it. The family in which I was were remarkably regular. There were five boys and five girls of them, from marriageable age down to infancy; and I do not remember to have seen an angry look or to have heard a cross word among them during the time I was there. I admired the regularity of the family. The cause was this: the father was ailing, of a slow consumption, so that he could not work, and he directed his whole endeavours to instructing his children in temporal and spiritual matters. And, to all appearance, God was with him.

"Next Monday we came down the river to the Nashwaak opposite to Fredericton. We went up the Nashwaak for the Highland settlement. On our way we saw a Baptist church,

* Called the Ridge.

where my guide proposed to stop two days, and give them a sermon or two. I could not refuse. The congregation was small, but respectable. When I reached the Highlanders, I found they were the remains of a Highland regiment which the British government had settled there at the conclusion of the revolutionary war in America. I found they had been miserably abused in their settlement. The officers got large lots of the best land; the men got lots all length and no breadth. The consequence was, that one-half of the men had to leave their lands and shift for themselves somewhere else. The rest took possession of their lots, some of them for something and some of them for nothing, and thus made a shift to live. Their dispersion disabled them from maintaining a minister of the gospel, and left them as stray sheep in the wilderness. A few of them had turned Baptists and Methodists; but the best and the worst of them had continued Presbyterians, but could do little to maintain the gospel. I preached to them, and gave the best direction I could to live a life of faith upon Christ, the Saviour of sinners. Next day I stopped at Fredericton, but had no opportunity of preaching. The day after I returned to my old quarters, where I stayed and preached the Sabbath following.

"On Monday I set off on my return home, and that night slept at the house at the lake, where I was treated so kindly before. In passing the few miles of wood from the river to this house, it was so dark that I had to trust the horse more than myself. In the middle of the wood he turned suddenly to the left hand. I struck him to turn him back, but immediately he turned again. I struck him again, but still he turned to his own way. I was then visited with a sudden fear that he might be right, and that I was putting him wrong, and so I let him take his own way, and he soon brought me to the house. As soon as he was stabled, and I began to chat with the good man, he told me I was wrong, and the horse right, so that if I had not yielded we must have been out all night. In this house I

met with every Christian attention, and left them in the morning with mutual feelings of love and kindness.

"Next night I reached the lady's house who showed me the way going, and who invited me to lodge with her on my return. Her husband was at home, and welcomed me cordially. We employed our time chiefly in religious conversation, giving and receiving mutual instruction. Of books, they had only a Bible and a hymn-book, with both of which they seemed pretty well acquainted. We concluded with family worship and retired for the night. The house was all kitchen, and my bed was on the floor. The soil was sandy and the fleas numerous. I could get no rest or sleep, with their constant biting and crawling. As soon as I found all the rest were asleep, I went and shook them away as clean as possible, and then returned unseen to my bed. I was soon as bad as before, but made no complaint, and remained as content as I could, and rose with the rest. We spent this morning in religious conversation, and after breakfast and family worship we prepared to go to the place where I was to preach. They came to hear the first Presbyterian minister that had come to the place. I preached as plainly and faithfully as I could on these words, 'Look unto me, and be ye saved.' I conversed but little about the sermon after it was over, as I needed to be on my way home. One of the Highlanders who were at sermon, took me along with him, and lodged me with much Christian feeling. Next day he rode nine or ten miles along with me—that is, three miles past the house where the strap of my saddle-bags was cut—where we parted most affectionately. I soon reached my kind friend, Mr. Scott's, who prevailed on me to stay all night with him. He entertained me by reading curious poetical compositions of his own. I endeavoured to make my conversation pleasant and profitable to him. Having stayed all night, I set forward in the morning. I soon reached the place where my horse before walked so steadily on one side of the dyke. He never offered to try it again. He saw the path leading round the dam, and took it at once. When we came back to the road, I alighted, to have a

better view of his foot-steps along the dam side. I could not distinguish them. I travelled till I came to Westmoreland, where I lodged with a Baptist. He requested me to preach in their meeting-house. I did so, and reached home the second day.

"On getting home I heard there was a vessel at the beaches and a minister on board. Next morning I took a boat and went to see; and there I saw Mr. (now Dr.) MacCulloch. By-and-by his family and baggage were brought ashore. Mr. MacCulloch was intended for Prince Edward Island; but Dawson * saw among his baggage a pair of globes. This occasioned his being called to Pictou, where he still remains."

The Rev. Daniel MacCurdy passed over the scene of his labours, and has informed me that though this was the only visit he paid to that part of the country, his memory is still savoury over a considerable extent of country. The following incidents were related to me by him. On one occasion he was asked if he could tell his experience, this being with a certain class of religionists the sum and substance of piety. He replied, "I have not much to tell about my experience, but I can tell you my *faith*." On one occasion having stopped to get his horse shod, the blacksmith told him that his wife was a pious woman, and invited him into the house, to talk with her. In a little they were engaged in religious conversation. "But do you hold to election?" said the woman. "Oh no, election holds me," was the reply. The same saying is attributed to Rowland Hill, and perhaps the Doctor may have got it in that way.

The following incident of this visit I have had from a reliable source. When visiting the Highlanders up the Nashwaak, the people collected about £7 for him. He received the money, but hearing of a poor widow who had lost her only cow, he gave it to her to buy another.

It may be mentioned here, that the Presbytery made various efforts to supply the people whom he visited on this occasion,

* The late John Dawson, Esq., for several years an influential person in Pictou.

but from the scarcity of preachers they could do but little for them. The result was therefore that they fell in with other denominations.

We shall here give the principal part of one of his letters to the Rev. Samuel Gilfillan, published in the Christian Magazine, as it not only gives a more particular description of this visit, but also a view of the state of matters in general within the more immediate sphere of his labours.

Pictou, *Oct.* 31*st*, 1805.

Dear Sir :—I am unwilling that our correspondence should cease (as it has for a time), though I were to get no other benefit from it, but better and readier information concerning my relations and my native country, than I can otherwise obtain. The greater part of those I was acquainted with are gone, and were I to return I would see chiefly a new people and a new place. But the principal features of the country remain unchanged, and some of my relations and acquaintances are still alive, on which account I wish to hear of the one and of the other. I suspect that I have a tenderer attachment to that country than if I were there; and that fancy paints the scenes gayer than the life. Once I thought that few earthly pleasures could be equal to see a young country rising by rapid improvement from nothing into importance, which I have seen and do see literally come to pass. This pleasure might perhaps be equal to its picture in the fancy, were not experience to come in with painful feelings of difficulties and disadvantages incident to a new country. Such is the rapidity of improvements in Pictou, that by and by we shall not well know whether to call it an old or a new country. But while we are advancing towards more of the advantages of the former, we are leaving behind us those of the latter in proportion; so that it is not easy to judge, which is best, the state before us or the state behind us. Indeed I believe, that the wisdom of Providence hath balanced the sweets and the bitters of all countries, so that the difference between the best and the worst is not great. I knew Pictou when it possessed scarcely any of the advantages of civil society, but then it had no thieves or villains, no lawsuits, no taxes; we were all brothers, almost all things were common. Now we have three ministers, and we cannot all keep down open wickedness. Some years ago land could be had for nothing, now it must be bought; but while it could be had for nothing, it was a nuisance, and our cry was for people to occupy it, and now when it must be bought, it is of value; and a piece of land that would a few years ago be sold for one hundred pounds, may now be sold for two hundred without any alteration in its real value. All is vanity.

If we had more ministers, our church would flourish much more than it does. Prince Edward Island is still unprovided for. Several of our

congregations will in a few years need to be divided into two. Merigomish, near Pictou, will take a minister as soon as he comes. This summer I made a tour of a considerable part of the Province of New Brunswick. I went about three hundred miles from home. I saw many settlements in a very destitute situation. In general they were so thinly peopled, that they could not support the gospel in their present lukewarmness. I saw no place so populous as Pictou. The River St. John, with its various branches, makes up the principal part of the Province of New Brunswick. The river is settled for more than two hundred miles up. I saw four or five of its branches; some are settled twenty, some thirty, some forty miles. This settling, however, consists only of one row of inhabitants on each side of the river, pretty close where the land is good, pretty far apart where it is bad. Scarcely anywhere is there a second row behind. When I reached my journey's end, were I to set down one foot of the compasses where I was, and extend the other two hundred miles, and describe a circle, I fear it would not include two real gospel ministers. There are a few Church of England ministers on the river, (with whom I had not an opportunity of personal acquaintance,) but I was informed that the people left them, when they became concerned about their souls. The chief part of the people are New Lights, whose principles are a mixture of Calvinism, Antinomianism, and enthusiasm. They are, however, the best materials which the place affords for the formation of a church. The rest of the people are Wesley's Methodists, who are rather on the decline. On the other hand the New Lights are increasing, and I suppose rather improving in their principles, and they have now changed their denomination from New Lights to Baptists. They baptize not infants, for their teachers are mostly laymen. They have lately fallen in with a Baptist minister in the metropolis of this Province, who got some of them ordained. This circumstance may beget a lasting attachment to the Baptists. When I went among them, I found that many of them never saw or heard a Presbyterian minister. They heard of them and thought them all good. They heard me with apparent eagerness and pleasure. Had we a few ministers in that Province I suppose they might unite with us. Great allowance should be made for them as they never heard the pure gospel. I saw four places in that Province where hope may be entertained of Presbyterian congregations. The first of them is the place that called me thither. They consist of between twelve and twenty men, pretty substantial both as men and Christians. They have a kirk, a manse, and a glebe. Most of them are from New England and were Congregationalists; but there the Congregationalists and Presbyterians frequently kept communion together. They would accept a Presbyterian minister, if he were not very rigid. This is an opening not to be neglected. It is near the centre of the Province. The other three places are settlements where are a few Presbyterians for a foundation, but they are all weaker than the first place. I believe there would soon be a demand for a number of ministers in that Province if they had once one. I heard of a corner of the Province, where there were more Presbyterians than any place I had seen, but I could not

go to them. I passed through several other settlements where I had not time to make any stay.—*Christian Mag.*, vol. x.

Turning to home labours, we may record a curious incident which befell him this autumn. We shall give it as it appears in his Memorabilia, omitting the name of the party concerned.

"In 1805, Nov. 10, just as I was going to begin public worship, —— ——, stood up in the meeting house, and spoke to this effect, 'James, I ask you wherefore you railed at me in the sermon last Sabbath? Why did you not bring me before the Session? Am I not a gentleman? Did not I support the gospel from the beginning? I have something to say to you. You was guilty of adultery in the first house you lodged in. You are accused of fornication in the next house you lodged in.' Donald MacKay interrupted him, saying that he was profaning the Sabbath. Then —— —— stamped with his foot, wrinkled his face, clenched his fist, and having reached out his arm, shook it in the most threatening manner, and said something which I do not recollect. N. B. There was no railing in the sermon referred to, and the other accusations were false."

On the matter being brought under the notice of the Presbytery, they laid it upon the Doctor as a duty to prosecute the individual in the civil court, although his own disposition would have led him to have passed it over. On steps being taken to prosecute the individual, good Mr. Brown interposed his offices as mediator, and brought the man to the following acknowledgement, which terminated the affair.

"Be it remembered that on the 10th day of November last (the Lord's day) I —— —— of the East River of Pictou, County of Halifax, and Province of Nova Scotia, did, very improperly and rashly, being in a great rage, groundlessly charge the Rev. James MacGregor, at and of Pictou aforesaid, with adultery and fornication, by publicly saying that in the first house he had resided in after coming to this place, he had been guilty of the former, and in the second of the latter. I now publicly acknowledge my fault, and declare my sorrow for

having thus improperly expressed myself, believing in my heart that these charges are without foundation. I therefore entreat the Almighty to forgive this one of my greatest sins. I also beg Mr. MacGregor's pardon—trusting that I may be in future guided by a more Christian spirit. Witness my hand at Pictou, this 21st day of August, 1806.

——— ———.

Ed. Mortimer, Witness,
John Brown, "

It is worthy of mention that though this unfortunate individual continued to show hostility to Doctor MacGregor, his family are to this day decent members of his congregation.

During the summer of 1806 the Doctor performed another laborious missionary journey in Prince Edward Island, of part of which the following fragment of his narrative presents a sketch.

"1806, July 1. Went to Prince Edward Island. The inhabitants were still increasing, and my visits needed to more and more new settlements, as well as to the old ones.

"On the 2nd, being Tuesday, I landed at Three Rivers. On Friday I preached three sermons on Eph. ii. 3–5, and went to Murray Harbour. On Saturday, the 5th, I preached two sermons, and came to William Graham's, seven miles distant, and preached one discourse, and returned to Three Rivers. On Sabbath, the 6th, I preached three times at Three Rivers. On Monday, the 7th, I went to Bay Fortune, and on Tuesday, the 8th, preached two sermons there. On Wednesday, the 9th, went to St. Peter's, and preached there two sermons on Thursday, and two on Friday. On Saturday, the 12th, I went to Cove Head and preached. On Sabbath, the 13th, I preached three sermons, and three more on the Tuesday following, from Rom. v. 1—12, and Eph. ii. 10. On Wednesday, I preached at the house of Mr. Simpson, New Loudon,* a very pious and intelligent man from Moray, on Ezek. xxxvi. 31. On Thurs-

* More properly Cavendish.

day, I preached at Mr. Cosens'* two discourses on Gal. ii. 30. On Friday, preached at Malpeque (Princetown) one sermon, and on Sabbath, preached three sermons on Matt. xxv. and Gal. ii. 20. On the Thursday following, preached two discourses on Psalm xcv. 7, and heard Mr. Pidgeon preach. On Saturday, preached two sermons. On Sabbath, the 27th, preached the action sermon on Phil. ii. 8, fenced the tables, and served four, and preached a Gaelic sermon. Also heard Mr. Pidgeon serve a table and preach. On Monday, I preached twice on Heb. ii. 10–12, and Isa. vi. 6, 7, and heard Mr. Pidgeon preach. After sermon went to Bedeque."

This mission lasted for six weeks; of his employment during four of which we have an account above. It will be seen that he preached thirty-seven times and delivered five addresses in twenty-five days, besides travelling over a great portion of the Island. Nor were his sermons short. They were not like some modern efforts twenty minutes' essays of amiable sentimentalism, read in a manner that would not excite the nerves of the speaker. They were of good length. But rarely the people heard the voice of the preacher of righteousness, and the pious listened with deep delight for an hour to the message of truth. They were too, like Elihu, "full of matter." Every one of them contained some important doctrine, clearly stated, and thoroughly discussed; and they were delivered with a power and earnestness, which, while fitted to lodge the truth in the mind of the hearer so far as human power could do it, were most trying to his physical system but especially to his nervous organization. It will be seen, however, that on other occasions he did not preach as much as on this occasion, but still he was not idle, being constantly engaged, when not travelling or sleeping, in ministering the word from house to house. The other two weeks were spent in similar labours at Bedeque, Lot 16, &c.

The following incident which we have received from a source which we deem reliable, probably took place on the occasion of

* New London.

dispensing the sacrament at Princetown as described above. During the time of preaching, either on Thursday or Saturday, there suddenly arose a fearful storm of wind. So violent was it that the people in church were afraid that the building would be unroofed. He stopped and engaged in prayer to Him who "rides upon the whirlwind," to "stay his rough wind." In a few minutes the storm abated. It was discovered afterward that there were several boats crossing at the time from the other side of Richmond Bay. When they set out there were no indications of danger, but the storm arose so suddenly and so violently, that those on board feared that they would have been swamped, but when they were in the greatest extremity the storm abated as suddenly as it arose.

The following additional information regarding his visit on this occasion to George Town and Murray Harbour, has been furnished by the Rev. Neil MacKay. It was in the former place that he landed from Pictou, having come over in a large boat which had been built for the Right Rev. Doctor MacEachran, Roman Catholic Bishop of Prince Edward Island at the time. By this time a number of families had arrived from Perthshire, and to these he preached in Gaelic. At one of the public services he was shamefully abused by a drunken man, who called him "a black mouthed Seceder," and a great many illnatured things; but the Doctor took no notice whatever of him. He baptized a child for the wife of this very man at the same diet of worship. At one service he baptized a child without announcing the name, because the parent in applying to him asked to give the child a name.

It was on this occasion he first visited Murray Harbour. There were at that time only three actual settlers besides the hands connected with a fishing establishment set up by Mr. Cambridge the year previous. Early in that spring (1806) a number of families immigrated from Guernsey, and were at that time living in Mr. Cambridge's store, upon a point in the harbour still commonly known as the "Old Store Point," where the harbour beacon now stands. These were all the inhabitants

at that time. His preaching took place at the house of Mr. James Irving, a Dumfriesshire Presbyterian. The immigrants from Guernsey were generally Episcopalians, considerably tinged with Arminianism, through the teaching of John Wesley. The Doctor's ministrations were very acceptable to them. They subsequently took land in the place and were the ancestors of a large portion of the present population. It is believed that his attention to them at this early stage of the settlement was the means which led to the adherence of many of them and their descendants still to Presbyterianism.

It may be mentioned, that after this date the population of Murray Harbour increased rapidly, as Mr. Cambridge in that year built a large establishment of mills and commenced a trade in lumber, which gave employment to a number of persons, who ultimately took up land in the neighbourhood, and immigrants poured in from various quarters. The Doctor visited them on several occasions, but exact particulars of his visit we have not been able to gather. It is sufficient to say that his visits were the means of cherishing them as a congregation, till they were able to obtain a minister of their own.

This season he had the privilege of welcoming one who should permanently be stationed on the Island, viz., the Rev. Peter Gordon, another who had been induced to devote himself to the work of the ministry in this country through his published letter. Mr. Gordon had been a working weaver, but hearing Doctor MacGregor's printed letter read from the pulpit of the congregation to which he belonged, he was so impressed with the destitute condition of the colonists, that he resolved to devote himself to study, with a view to the holy ministry, and with a determination on his licensure to come to Doctor MacGregor's assistance. He pursued his object amid many difficulties, and probably undermined his constitution by the severity of his application. But upon his licensure, he immediately offered his services for Nova Scotia, and being accepted, he arrived here in the course of the summer. He was a man of warm feelings, and on first seeing Doctor MacGregor, he rushed

into his arms saying, "Oh, father you have brought me to this country."

After supplying Halifax and other places in Nova Scotia for a few weeks, he was sent over to Prince Edward Island for the winter. The Presbytery were particularly anxious about that part of the church, in consequence of their being so long without a minister, and being so frequently disappointed. In the year 1799, the Rev. Francis Pringle had been appointed to that quarter, but coming out by the way of New York, the Presbytery there detained him. In the year 1803, Doctor MacCulloch arrived in Pictou for the same destination, but it being too late for him to get a passage across he remained in Pictou all winter, and was settled there in the following spring, persons arriving in Pictou from Prince Edward Island to take him across, on the very day of his induction. Mr. Gordon was therefore appointed to the Island for the winter, and was soon after settled at St. Peter's. This relieved the Presbytery, in a great measure, of the charge which they had had of that portion of the church.

CHAPTER XVII.

FROM THE ARRIVAL OF MR. GORDON, TILL THE SETTLEMENT OF MR. PIDGEON.—1806–1812.

"Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee because thou hast left thy first love."—Rev. ii. 4.

During the year 1807, as already mentioned, he paid his second visit to Miramichi, but we have no particulars of it, additional to what has been already given.

We have no account of any missionary excursions during the year 1808, and the minutes of Presbytery after the year 1806 have been lost, but we know that about this time the members of Presbytery were engaged in supplying Halifax, where a congregation had been formed shortly before. There had been for some time a Presbyterian minister there; but he was said to have been in his doctrine an Arminian, and in his general practice a fair specimen of the "Moderate" clergy of the Church of Scotland; and some serious persons were anxious for a minister of a different stamp. They therefore united in purchasing a church, which had been originally used by the Methodists. In some way the title to it was in the hands of a wealthy individual in that connection, but he having quarrelled with them, refused them the use of the building, and for some time preached in it himself. Finally he sold it to the parties just mentioned, who in the year 1806 applied to Presbytery for supply of preaching. This was granted, and Mr. Gordon supplied them for six weeks on his arrival in the Province. For the next three or four years they were supplied by the Presbytery, but, as there were scarcely any unsettled ministers under their care,

the most of the work had to be done by members of Presbytery. Doctor MacGregor did his full share, supplying them on more than one occasion for two or three weeks. But we have no particulars of his visits.

This autumn, (1808,) arrived another minister, who was afterward to be distinguished by his abundant labours, and whose personal excellencies have since rendered him the object of esteem wherever he was known. We allude to Doctor Keir, whose recent removal the church now deplores. He had come out specially to supply Halifax, but Mr. Gordon's health was now failing, and the Presbytery being anxious about the condition of the church there, sent him thither for the winter. In April following, the brethren were saddened by the death of Mr. Gordon, which made the first breach in their number. Previous to his arrival in this country the seeds of consumption were sown in his constitution. From the time of his arrival in the Island, he had laboured with great diligence in his Master's work, and was greatly beloved by the people. But the toils connected with his sphere of labour were too great for his weak physical frame to sustain. Still he laboured on, as if resolved to die in harness. Toward the close of winter he had gone from St. Peters to Princetown, but in great weakness, where he preached by exchange with Doctor Keir, and baptized a number of children. On his way home he died at Cove Head, leaving a widow and two fatherless children, one of them but a few weeks old, to the care of Him who hath said, "Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in me."

The members of Presbytery felt the bereavement keenly. They not only felt the loss of their brother's services to the church—they not only sympathized with his people, left as sheep without a shepherd, and with but little prospect of one to supply his place—they not only grieved as for the loss of a brother, who had been "very pleasant" to them in all his intercourse with them; but they felt something like that peculiar grief, which attends the first death in a family. They immediately

resolved to manifest their sympathy for his widow and children, in a practical manner. Subscriptions were taken up through their congregations for their relief. In this work Doctor MacGregor, who had already shown some of those qualifications, which caused him afterward to be good-humoredly described as the prince of beggars, and who was distinguished for his personal charity, was particularly forward.

In summer he was sent over to minister the bounty of the churches. In his memoranda he says, "1809, Gordon died, and I went to comfort his wife." On this occasion he not only preached at St. Peters, but at Cavendish, and Princetown, and we believe at other places. He moderated in a call at Princetown to Mr. Keir, and we believe also at St. Peters. The latter in the meantime returned to the main land where he supplied Halifax and Merigomish. But such was now the state of the Island, that the Presbytery, with whom at that time rested the decision in competing calls, appointed him to Princetown, with his own entire concurrence. His ordination, however was deferred till the following June.

In this year, (1809,) the Presbytery received another accession to their number, in the person of the Rev. John Mitchell. He was a native of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, had been educated at Hoxton Academy, and came out to Quebec as a missionary, of the London Missionary Society. After labouring for some time at Bay Chaleur, he settled at Amherst, whence he removed to River John, in the year previous, from which time he preached not only there, but at Tatamagouche, and Wallace; and afterward at New Annan. Though originally a Congregationalist, he in this year joined the Presbytery, of which he continued a member till his death. He was not a man of superior gifts, but he was a good man, and a faithful preacher of righteousness. Thus another portion of the vineyard, in which Doctor MacGregor was the first to preach the gospel, obtained a minister, whose labours extended over a sphere, which now employs the labours of four or five ministers.

In June 1810, the Presbytery proceeded to Princetown, for

the purpose of ordaining Doctor Keir. The members present were Doctor MacGregor, the Rev. Duncan Ross, Doctor MacCulloch, and the late Mr. Mitchell, of River John. They arrived by way of Bedeque late in the week. Doctor MacGregor preached on Saturday, from Phil. iii. 8. "I count all things but loss for the excellency of Christ Jesus my Lord." But the ordination did not take place till the following day, (Sabbath). An ordination was then an event entirely new in that part of the Island, and excited great interest. There were many, doubtless, who rejoiced in the event, as realizing their long disappointed expectations, of having the ordinances of religion regularly dispensed among them. But the novelty of the event excited the curiosity of many others. So that the whole population, not only of Princetown, but of New London, Bedeque, and the west side of Richmond Bay, able to attend, assembled on the occasion. The audience, for those days, when population was sparse, was considered immense. The old church would not hold half of the congregation. A platform was accordingly erected outside the church, but close by it, on which the ordination took place. Part of the audience remained seated in the church within sight and hearing, while the rest were assembled outside. Doctor MacCulloch preached from Acts xvii. 31. "He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained," narrated the steps, put the questions of the formula, and offered the ordination prayer. Mr. Ross gave the charge to the people, and we believe also to the minister, and Mr. Mitchell concluded the services by a sermon from Acts xiii. 26. "To you is the word of this salvation sent." But considerable disappointment was felt by the people, that they were not hearing the voice of Doctor MacGregor, whom they regarded as the father of the congregation, and whom many of them individually esteemed as their spiritual father. As one brother after another occupied the stand, there were whisperings, "Will it be him next?" and as the services were concluding without his taking any part, their disappointment almost

amounted to vexation; but a complete revulsion took place, when it was intimated that, in ten minutes after the benediction was pronounced, Doctor MacGregor would preach in Gaelic. The people of Princetown were originally from Cantyre, in Argyleshire, and the old people mostly spoke Gaelic, so that they eagerly crowded around him to hear the gospel in their native tongue, and such was their interest in it, and their esteem for him increased by the revulsion of feeling resulting from their previous disappointment, that he had been speaking but a few minutes when the whole congregation were bathed in tears. Altogether the day was one of deep and hallowed interest, and yet has a place in the fondest recollections of the few surviving of those present, while the young have heard of it traditionally as a day long to be remembered.

But, "when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan also came with them," and so it seemed to be on the present occasion. There was a man present, who was an infidel and a bold blasphemer. He had considerable skill in sketching, and drew a caricature of the whole proceedings. He pictured Doctor MacGregor in one of his postures of greatest earnestness, and represented him with words coming out of his mouth, which were a profane misrepresentation of his text, while leading persons in the congregation were exhibited with mouths open, or in other ridiculous postures. Apart from its profanity the thing was cleverly done, and it was shown to a good number. The author was at that time a man of influence,—had a fine establishment of mills,—and for a time made considerable money, but he came to poverty, and died in Charlotte Town in great wretchedness.

This summer Mrs. Gordon removed to Nova Scotia, and we may here notice some events in her history, as she is soon to be brought within the scope of our narrative. She had been left an orphan at an early age, but though she felt some of the hardships which so often fall to the lot of such, yet the God of the fatherless watched over her interests, and provided for all her necessities. She learned those lessons which are taught with

such peculiar efficiency in the school of adversity, and early she learned to put her trust in the God of her fathers, whose Providential care she was often afterward to find a never failing resource. At an early age she went to live with her uncle, the Rev. Archibald Bruce of Whitburn, then professor of Theology to the Antiburgher Synod; but not to eat the bread of dependence, for the terms on which she lived with him, were such as to render her support the result of her own industry. As she grew up she for a number of years kept house for him, he being unmarried, and as the Theological Hall of the Synod met annually at Whitburn, she became intimately acquainted with most of those, who were afterward the ministers of the body.

While residing here she heard Doctor MacGregor's printed letter read from the pulpit of the congregation to which she belonged, and was much affected by it. On her return home she gave free expression to her feelings of sympathy for the destitute state of the people of this country. "I am *vexed*," she said, "for the state of those poor people, and that no person goes to them." "Oh!" said her uncle, "these things are painted." "I do not know," she replied, "but they seem to me like the truth." "Would you go to them?" asked her uncle. "Well if I thought I could do any good I think that I would." Little did she imagine how she was to be taken at her word. As we have already mentioned, Mr. Gordon about the same time heard the same letter read, and was in like manner so affected by it, that he devoted himself to study with a view to the work of the ministry.

For a time her life moved smoothly on, and she had the prospect of a comfortable settlement in her native land, by a union with one who ministered in holy things in the body to which she belonged; when suddenly there came upon her one of those disappointments, which has crushed many a gentle heart, and caused many a lovely flower to wither on its stem. He whom she trusted broke the most solemn vow, we believe for the gold of another. Like a slender reed she was bent low before the

storm, but under the pressure of the stern duties of life, her spirit recovered its elasticity, and ere long it appeared, that Providence had appointed her sphere in very different circumstances. Without descending to particulars, we have only to say that ten years after the conversation above described she was married to Mr. Gordon, then under appointment to Nova Scotia. Her uncle, who united them in marriage, reminded her of what had transpired on the occasion of the reading of Doctor MacGregor's letter, which she had for some time forgotten. The recollection of it deeply impressed her mind, and led herself and her friends to unite in admiration of the manner in which God leads his people in a way that they know not.

When Mr. Gordon died she was again left destitute, and that with two little fatherless children, one of them only a few days old; and though sometimes "cast down," yet her trust was in the faithfulness of a covenant keeping God. On one occasion she was sitting in tears reflecting upon her situation. Her eldest little girl, who was playing about the room, came up to her knee, and looking in her face with the artless confidence of childhood said, "Mamma, God help us." "My child," said the mother as she clasped her in her arms, "you have rebuked me."

The Presbytery having taken her case into consideration, arranged that she should live with Mr. Dick, as he had a large house and no family, and it was expected that either by teaching or sewing she might maintain her family. It was in this view that she came over to Nova Scotia, but when she came to the East River, Mrs. MacGregor would not hear of her leaving on any condition. It was represented that Mr. Dick had a large house. "Oh, our house is large enough," was the reply. "But he has no family." "Still there is room enough, or if there is not we can build another." Her determination prevailed, and the Doctor set to work to build a small house for Mrs. G. on a corner of his lot, partly from his own means, but partly by subscriptions wherever he could obtain them. During the time it was building, she lodged in the Doctor's house, and

when it was completed, she went to occupy it, intending to support herself and little ones either by teaching or sewing. Little did any of them dream of what was soon to transpire.

Mrs. Gordon had not been many weeks in her own house, when Mrs. MacGregor was suddenly removed by death. On the 6th of Nov., she gave birth to her fourth son, and seventh child. She had as was thought safely passed her hour of trial, and the Doctor informed of it retired to his closet. But from unskilfulness in the subsequent treatment on the part of those about her, her case took an unfavourable turn. The Doctor having returned from his retirement, said that he had just been giving thanks to God for her safe delivery. But already she was in great agony and expired in a few hours after.

This event we need scarcely say was the greatest trial that had yet befallen him, and he was greatly "cast down" by it. The severity of the stroke in itself, its startling suddenness coming when danger was thought to be over, the peculiar circumstances of the case, particularly the manner in which her death had been occasioned, combined with his great natural tenderness of heart, so affected him, that the strong man was for the time bowed to the earth. The common people, who were apt to mistake strong feeling for want of resignation, were greatly surprised at the depth of his sorrow. Their views might be expressed in the language of Eliphaz to Job, "Behold thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands. Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees. But now it is come upon thee and thou faintest; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled." To one who expressed surprise at his being so deeply affected by it, he said, "Do you think I am a stick or a stone?" Donald MacKay said to him, "James, where is all the strength and support you have been giving us in our trouble?" "Ah, Donald," was the reply, "I was then *in the spirit*, but I am now *in the flesh*."

Till this time he had not failed in fulfilling *an appointment to preach*. He was to have preached at the Upper Settlement

the day following, being a day of humiliation or thanksgiving. He, however, did not go, and we believe also that he did not preach on Sabbath. Doubtless he might have said as did Aaron when his sons were cut off, "Such things have befallen me; and if I had eaten the sin offering to-day, should it have been accepted in the sight of the Lord?" On the Sabbath following he preached at the Upper Settlement in the old church, from Rev. xiv. 13, "Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours and their works do follow them." He alluded most affectingly to the event, and applied it most solemnly. He brought it home to himself, as well as the people. He said that death had come as near him as it could without touching himself.

But soon Christian faith and resignation prevailed. Writing on the 4th December following to the Rev. Samuel Gilfillan, he thus describes the event:

"Yours of November 1809, I received in the course of last summer, I do not mind the time exactly. I was not anxious to answer it till November, the usual time of my writing home; and when that time arrived, my attention was arrested by another subject. It pleased God, on the 6th of last month, to call home to himself the dear partner of my joys and griefs, and to leave me struggling in the vale of tears. But his 'goodness and mercy shall follow me all my days.' The hand of my heavenly Father never administered to me such an affecting stroke. Yet those of sorrow were not the only tears I shed. I have no reason to mourn as those who have no hope. She died (and I may say she lived) praying for mercy through the Redeemer."

He afterward erected a monument to her memory with the following inscription, in Gaelic *verse*.

Bu bhean phosda bha tlathi
Bu mhathair bha caoin
Bha creidimh le gradh aic
Us gnath nach robh faoin.

Of which the meaning in English is, "She was a wife most affectionate, a mother most tender, she had faith with love and a conduct consistent."

We may as well here tell the rest of our story. A few months rolled by. His desire to comfort the widow and to minister to the fatherless drew him often to the cottage at the corner of his lot. Perhaps the expression of mutual sympathy in their bereaved condition rendered such visits a solace to his own spirit. Public rumour would have it that other motives drew him thither. His own natural sagacity soon led him to perceive the incongruity of keeping up two houses with two families, on one farm, each family having only a single parent, and the advantage of their being united under one roof. He presented such strong arguments on the subject, that the lady could not but acknowledge their force, as well as the propriety of setting public rumours at rest. Accordingly in writing to Doctor Keir, on the 20th Dec. 1811, he says, "There is a talk, and I suppose upon good authority, that Mrs. Gordon and I are to be married in a week or two." Accordingly early in the year 1812, they were duly united. We have no such romantic incidents to record of his second as of his first marriage; but we may say that the union was as happy as a union could be between two sinful mortals in this world, and one which was a great blessing to their respective families. Her children he treated as his own, and their affection for him became as intense as it could have been for their own father; while she was indeed a mother to his children, each of whom has retained through life the same feelings that they would have had for their own mother, a feeling so strong that the common idea of step-mothers they have been disposed to class with the improbable fictions of a barbarous age. Mr. Ross used to say in his good humoured way, that one good wife was enough for one man, but that Doctor MacGregor had had two.

Of the summer of 1811, he thus writes in a letter to Doctor Keir. "This year is uncommonly hard upon the generality of people in this Province. Provisions are very scarce, and money

still scarcer. We ministers are not getting our stipends paid so well as usual, but we have plenty to eat. Our Legislature has established a number of Grammar Schools in this Province with an hundred pounds salary to each, besides the pay of the scholars. Mr. MacCulloch has got the one for our district."

During the same summer the Rev. Mr. Pidgeon, who had been sent out by the London Missionary Society, was on application received by the Presbytery as a minister under their inspection, and during that season was called to the pastoral charge of the congregation of St. Peter's, Cove Head, and Bay Fortune, left vacant by the death of Mr. Gordon. His induction was appointed to take place the following spring, and Doctor MacGregor, Doctor Keir, and Mr. Dick, were appointed a committee of Presbytery for that purpose. But before that time it pleased the Great Head of the Church to remove Mr. Dick from his earthly labours. He died in the winter of the year 1812. His death was deeply felt by the brethren and throughout the church. In spring Doctor MacGregor proceeded to Prince Edward Island, being taken thither in a boat belonging to Mr. James MacLaren. He was landed at George Town, and thence proceeded to St. Peter's on horseback. There he met Mr. Keir. Such was then the infrequency of communication between the Island and the mainland, that Mr. Keir had not heard of Mr. Dick's death. The first enquiry therefore was, "Where is Mr. Dick?" to which Doctor MacGregor solemnly replied, "Mr. Dick is in eternity." We have no particular account of the induction services. In private, when it was over, he good humouredly remarked to some of the people, "You ought to be much obliged to me, as I have taken your former minister's wife off your hands, and now I am come to give you another minister."

After the induction he returned to George Town, and Murray Harbour, at both of which places he preached. He does not seem to have itinerated in other parts of the Island. Probably as the principal settlements in the western part of the Island were now under the charge of Doctor Keir, and those

in the east under Mr. Pidgeon, he did not feel it necessary. He was taken home from Murray Harbour in the same boat that had brought him over.

We shall conclude this chapter with some account of the degeneracy in morals in Pictou, which, as we have already intimated began some years before, but which was now at its height. He, himself, thus describes it in a letter written about the year 1809.

"I am already an old man, failing both in body and mind; while my labour, could I attend to it, is constantly increasing. Though I cannot say that I am labouring in vain, yet the kingdom of Satan is visibly growing stronger every year. There is an incredible change in Pictou in my time. For the first nine or ten years we were visibly reforming, but ever since the generality have been backsliding, though many individuals are still holding on their way. Many of the older Christians have dropped off the stage, and few of those who have come in their place have their spirit. Many causes contribute their influence to our degeneracy. There were not much above 400 souls, if so many, in Pictou, when I came to it, whereas we are now nigh 4000, if not more. When people increase, sin multiplies. The first settlers had to struggle hard in clearing the woods for a living, their sons enjoying their labours are easy but not good. The first settlers mingled little with the world, through poverty and want of roads; now we have some riches and tolerable roads, and of course easy communication with strangers and their infections. We have suffered from emigrants settling among us from different parts of the Highlands; but more from merchants and traders from England, and the south of Scotland. The ignorance and superstition of the former have not done us so much evil, as the avarice, the luxury, the show, and the glittering toys of the latter.

"But the grand cause of our depravation is the shutting up of the Baltic. If the Devil contrived it for the ruin of our morals, he is a master in politics; for it were hard to contrive a more effectual scheme for that purpose. If God were not

above him, he would accomplish his end completely. Ever since that event, ships, sailors, money, and spirituous liquors with their attendant evils, have been pouring in among us continually. The great demand for timber has in a manner caused us to lay aside farming, our most innocent, and in the long run our most profitable earthly employment, and give up ourselves to the felling, squaring, hauling, rafting, and selling of timber to the ships, and the squandering of money. Once in a day I could not have believed that all the vices in the world would have done so much damage in Pictou, as I have seen drunkenness alone do within these few years. Indeed, this sin is pre-eminent in America. The prosperity of fools destroys them. Gloomy indeed is the prospect which the young generation here presents. But still God rules; and Oh! how mysteriously and wonderfully does he prevent, permit, restrain, or let loose sinners in their evil ways. And I must confess that I see his love and truth more eminently glorified in the preservation of his own in the midst of so much wickedness, and so many temptations, than before they became so prevailing. Oh! the wisdom of God in training his poor inexperienced people to fight successfully with sin, his tenderness in suiting their trials to their ability, and his merciful power in making them conquerors, after being frequently foiled. But how desperate is the stupidity and brutishness of sinners, quite insensible to the struggle against sin, to the humility, self-denial, and holiness, manifest in the example of their nearest neighbours!"

The causes of this degeneracy are here fully described. The first was the great influx of worldly prosperity. When the war first broke out, the price of timber fell, but it soon rose to an unprecedented height. Especially after the closing of the Baltic ports against British commerce by the decrees of Napoleon, the demand for Colonial timber became very large, and great efforts were made to supply it, and Pictou became for years one of the chief places of export of timber to Britain. In the year 1805 its exports amounted to £105,000. Such an influx of prosperity introduced a large number of a very worthless

class of persons. It produced the extravagance and other evils of unregulated prosperity, while the vices of a state of war affected all classes of society. It might have been expected that such prosperity would at least have had an important influence upon the improvement of the country. But it would be difficult to find in any land an example of such prosperity leaving so few permanent results for good even upon its material progress. Farming retrograded. The farmers went to the woods for timber, and left their farms to neglect. The land was thus depreciated by having the valuable timber removed from it, without its being cleared or rendered fit for the plough; while a ruinous system of farming impoverished the land already under cultivation. The farmer thought only of hastily committing his seed to the ground in spring, and of removing the crop in harvest, and paid no attention to manuring, rotation, or other improved systems of agriculture; in many instances the dung being allowed to accumulate around their stables until the sills rotted, and it became a question whether it were easier to remove the mass or the barn, unless where an individual with more foresight erected his barn by a running stream, which served to carry away the filth. In this way their farms became thoroughly exhausted, and the evils of this state of things have continued to the present day, both by the improper system of farming which is even yet not entirely abolished, and by the bad reputation which the country gained as to its capabilities for agriculture. The merchants, partly owing to the system of credit already described, and partly owing to the changes which took place in the lumber market, nearly all failed. Scarcely one of them died wealthy. Of those who at one time were most flourishing, even of the man who counted himself worth £100,000, the estates proved insolvent; and the country came out of a season of commercial prosperity, such as it has never since seen, with exhausted resources.

Lumbering has been generally most fatal to the morals of those who have made it their business. The usual mode of conducting it was for a number of men to go to the woods in au-

tumn with a supply of provisions, and there to erect a rude camp in which they spent the winter, with the exception of visits to the settlements for necessaries. They then proceeded to cut down timber, to square and haul it to the neighbouring streams. In the spring, when the melting of the snow and the fall of rain causes a large rising of the rivers, the timber was floated down to the nearest port of shipping. This mode of living, separated from the humanizing influences of civilized life, tends to brutalize men; while the exposure to cold and wet, particularly in rafting in the spring, forms a strong temptation to hard drinking.

But the great characteristic of the times, as mentioned by the Doctor in an extract previously given, was the extent to which rum was used. The first settlers used very little. They had not the means of obtaining it, as it then cost twenty shillings a gallon. Besides pure water, or milk, almost the only drink in which they indulged was the Partridge berry tea. Even tea, now used in Nova Scotia to an extent, which for the number of its inhabitants is altogether unparalleled, was for some time an unknown luxury. We have heard of an old woman, inviting some of her friends to tea for the first time, who prepared it by boiling a pound, and carefully straining off the water, served up the leaves something in the form of greens. The arrival of the disbanded soldiers introduced drinking, and partially affected the habits of other settlers. But it was not till the lumbering business became active, that their morals and habits became seriously affected by the use of ardent spirits. In the year 1794, rum began to be introduced freely from the West Indies, and the extent to which it was consumed in after years seems now absolutely incredible. We have heard for example of a settlement, in which there was imported in the autumn at the rate of half a puncheon for every family in the settlement, and by the month of April the supply was exhausted.

The habit of drinking was most prevalent among the lumberers. We have heard for example of a man being employed at five shillings, with an allowance of two glasses per diem,

and yet being in debt in spring, though the money had gone for nothing but rum. When a lumbering party went to the woods, they initiated their proceedings with a carouse, which made such inroads into their supply of rum as rendered an early visit to the settlement necessary to have it replenished. When they did get to work, they daily consumed quantities which are to us inconceivable. We have heard of a man at work taking his glass every hour, or in the course of a day consuming his quart bottle of rum, while at intervals their labours were arrested for the enjoyment of a carouse, which might last two or three days. Thus in spring they still found themselves in debt to the merchant, from whom they had got their supplies in autumn, the timber they had made scarcely paying for the provisions they had consumed, and the rum they had drunk.

The lumberers, however, were not the only persons affected by the free introduction of rum. No class of society was exempt from its influence. The extent to which rum became *habitually* used, is little known to the present generation, but there are a number of persons still living, who from their recollection can give facts, which fill us with amazement. They can tell of the time, when two glasses a day was considered a moderate allowance for a working man—when a person in comfortable circumstances would not have thought of sitting down to dinner without a decanter on one corner of the table—when it would be an unpardonable affront if a neighbour when he called was not offered the bottle—when rum flowed freely alike at all occasions of family interest, births, deaths, and bridals*—and at all occasions of public concourse—when every bargain was cemented over the social glass—when in fact no business of any kind could be transacted except in presence of the bottle, and

* It is but just to observe that from the manner in which Baptism was administered, publicly and on the Sabbath day, from the careful examination of the character and knowledge of those who received it, as well as from the solemn feelings with which it is generally viewed by Scottish Presbyterians, we have never heard of "Christenings" being the occasions of feasting among Doctor MacGregor's hearers, as we have heard of there being in other places.

as has been often said a pig could not be killed without liquor.

As late as the year 1827, it was published in the local newspaper, as a remarkable circumstance that a house frame was raised without the use of ardent spirits.*

The habitual use of liquor, perhaps not quite to the extent which we have described, was common among the best and most sober part of the community. The minister as regularly took his dram as his parishioners—the elder sold liquor, and saw one son after another becoming drunkards. We may therefore imagine how much more deeply others indulged—how many lived and died drunkards. In fact, even the most respectable members of the community, and professors of Christianity, sometimes went to excess. Thus for long years the ministers of the county might be said to have maintained one grand struggle against rum, and it was not until the Temperance Reformation began about the year 1827, that the evil was decidedly checked.

Doubtless there were good men who had not defiled their garments—and among the rising generation, there were still some, we may say many, who gave themselves to the Lord. But in general it was a time when iniquity abounded, and the love

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* "On Friday last the frame of a large dwelling house, the property of George MacDonald, was erected without the use of *rum*. In lieu of it ale and beer were used, so that the work was completed in a superior manner, while neither abusive language nor profane swearing was heard, no black eyes nor drunken men seen; but peace and friendship pervading the concourse. That this change of custom, in this part of the country, will be followed in future (at least to a great degree) may be reasonably expected, since it tends not only to promote the harmony, health, and respectability, of those who assemble on such occasions, but the interests of the builder. Ten or twelve years ago he must have used almost as many gallons of the mighty rum, in erecting a frame of similar dimensions, and for this not unfrequently have his name stationed on the wrong side of some ledger; whence it may not be so readily erased, as some purchasers of spirits allow themselves to believe." —*Col. Patriot, 17th Sept.* 1828.

It may be added, that an attempt was made previously to raise without rum, but such was the small number of the friends of Temperance, and such the opposition of its enemies, that the attempt failed.

of many waxed cold. Even the Christians trained in that era were not equal in character and worth to the first generation trained in this county.

In the description we have now given, we do not mean to confine our remarks to the period at which we have arrived. The degeneracy had reached its height about this period, but it began about the end of the last century, and it extended to a greater or less extent over the first quarter of the present.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHRISTIAN AND BENEVOLENT ENTERPRISES.—1808–1815.

"That the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified." 2 Thess. iii. 1.

After his missionary tour in Prince Edward Island at the time of the induction of Mr. Pidgeon in 1812, we know of no missionary journeys undertaken during the two following years. But he had plenty of work at home. Besides the different sections of his congregation on the East River, he had to give occasional supply of preaching to Merigomish. Besides at that time it was customary when the Sacrament of the Supper was dispensed in one congregation, that all the neighbouring ministers should assist. This occupied a considerable amount of time in summer, the season most suited for missionary excursions. He was also clerk of Presbytery, and though the correspondence of the Church at that time was not very voluminous, yet it was sufficient to be felt as an encroachment upon his time.*

Besides about this time there was a large influx of emigrants from the Highlands, which continued for several years. These persons occupied the back settlements of the county of Pictou, and some portions of the adjoining counties. Those who set-

* Perhaps the war that was then prevailing may have hindered his visits to the neighbouring Provinces, as American Privateers were then frequently on the coast.

tled in the southern parts of the county naturally fell under his care, and he did what he could for their spiritual welfare. But being the only member of Presbytery able to preach in Gaelic, with the exception of Mr. Ross, who was imperfect at it, he was also frequently called to visit other settlements. Of such visits the following will serve as a sample. Being urgently solicited to go out to the back of Rogers' Mill, to preach to the Highlanders there, he consented if Mr. Ross would find a man to accompany him. Mr. John Douglass was the person selected. When they reached the place, they found a man who had come fifteen miles to hear sermon. The Doctor immediately said, "We need not complain of the distance we have come." He preached twice on Sabbath to a large congregation. As the service was concluding he said to Mr. Douglass, "John,* there is a large number of people here, how would it do to give them another sermon to-morrow?" Mr. Douglass replied, "We can only get home to-morrow, and if you have preaching early you can do that afterward." He accordingly intimated preaching the next day at 10 o'clock. Squire MacCara, with whom he lodged, promised to have dinner ready when sermon was over, that he might not be detained. When the sermon, which was in Gaelic, was about concluding, Mr. MacCara asked Mr. Douglass if he was near done. Mr. Douglass replied that he was. Mr. MacCara sped away to have dinner ready. But a moment after two old women came in, who had so exerted themselves to get there, that the perspiration was coming through their hair and wetting their caps. The Doctor immediately resumed his discourse, and preached almost as much longer. When they came to Mr. MacCara's, dinner was cold. The Squire said, "We must blame Mr. Douglass, for he told me that you were nearly done." Mr. Douglass replied, "We must blame Doctor MacGregor, for he lengthened out his discourse." "We must blame

* It should have been mentioned before that it was then the common way to address one another by their christian names. Doctor MacGregor encouraged his people in using the same style to himself. Hence he was often addressed as James, more especially by the Gaelic people.

the old women," said the Doctor. He then explained how it happened. "Oh, if that's the way," said the Squire, "we must not complain."

It is time however that we refer to his efforts on behalf of the missionary and benevolent institutions of the age. His interest in these had been practically manifested previous to the time in his history at which we have arrived, but from this time exertions were more systematic and extensive, and we wished to describe his efforts on behalf of different measures together.

From the incidents already recorded, it will have been apparent, that he was always remarkable for his charitable donations. During the whole of his ministry, there were numbers of new settlers arriving, who were for some years very poor. Often did he relieve such, particularly by giving them supplies of seed in spring. For such objects the sums sometimes given were for his circumstances very large. Thus a minister known to be *very* poor having visited him, and spent some weeks with him, he, on his departure, gave him £6 to buy a cow. As this minister died in 1799, this must have happened in the early part of his ministry. Indeed had it not been for the economy of himself and his wife, and their good management of their farm, his liberality might have embarrassed him in his worldly affairs.

This charity was in a number of instances returned into his own bosom. One curious example may be given. A sister of his, in humble circumstances, was on her way to Canada in an emigrant vessel with her family. On passing the coast of Nova Scotia, she expressed a wish that she were on land with her brother. One asked who was her brother there? She replied, "Doctor MacGregor, a minister in Pictou." The cook having heard this, told them that he had once landed at Pictou, after being shipwrecked, that the Doctor himself had come down to the wharf and taken off his own top coat and given it to him. He had also provided him with employment during the winter. The poor fellow was so grateful for this kindness that, during the rest of the voyage, he could not do enough for them.

But, considering the character of his own labours, and the missionary spirit which had ever characterized him, we might expect, that when the great movements of the present day for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom commenced his heart would be deeply interested in them. Accordingly, from their very outset, he watched their progress with the liveliest feelings of delight, and gratitude to the Great Head of the church. Intelligence from abroad was then only received at distant intervals, but when received was doubly welcome. People used to say that they could tell when he had received missionary tidings from abroad, by his preaching on the Sabbath after. The information thus received he diligently circulated among the people, and as soon as circumstances permitted, he endeavoured to enlist their sympathies practically in support of the leading Christian enterprises of the day.

This it must be observed was no easy matter. It is always a matter of some difficulty to bring a church unaccustomed to efforts of the kind, to do its duty. This was more difficult at the commencement of Missions, for then every thing was new. But it was especially difficult in his position in a new country, with a sparse population, the church consisting of a very few congregations,—many of its members poor, the large majority maintaining themselves only by hard labour, and scarcely any wealthy, and thinking themselves scarcely able to maintain the gospel among themselves. Indeed many would have considered that he would have been perfectly justified in not making any appeal to his people at all on the subject, more particularly when it was considered how imperfectly the stipends of himself and his brethren were paid. But his zeal on these subjects was as a consuming fire within his bones, and he engaged in the work with all the ardor of his nature. His success will appear by an account of the principal efforts of the kind made in his own and the neighbouring congregations.

The institution which most deeply enlisted his sympathy, and on behalf of which he first engaged the efforts of his people, was the British and Foreign Bible Society. From the time of

its formation he was interested in its proceedings, and he heard of its progress with intense delight. From an early period he adopted active measures in promoting its objects, both by circulating the Scriptures within his own sphere, and by raising subscriptions to aid the operations of the society. From the report of that Institution for the year 1808, we take the following extract of a letter from him, dated 4th December, 1807 :

Dear Sir :—By the reports of the British and Foreign Bible Society, I see among their good endeavours, their exertions, in favour of my countrymen, in the Highlands of Scotland. Of these many thousands, both Protestant and Catholic, have emigrated both formerly and of late into these parts of America. This district situated about 100 miles north-east of Halifax, contains 600 or 700 families of them, of which the majority are Protestants. Among these I have ministered in the gospel about twenty years, in their mother tongue, and for twelve years another minister has served in my neighbourhood in the same language. There are also many Highlanders in Prince Edward Island, (formerly St. John,) and Cape Breton; in the former they make the majority of the inhabitants. There is scarcely a corner of the Province, in which they are not to be found. The Catholics in general are quite indifferent about the Bible; but almost all the Protestants wish to have it, and as they cannot at present get it in Gaelic, most of them have it in English. Most of the old people cannot understand the English, nor read, but they send their children to school, and these can understand both languages, and of course translate, after a manner, a chapter for the benefit of their parents, which they generally do, morning and evening. Many of the young generation, and numbers of the old, can read the Gaelic, for *though we have but three or four full copies of the Bible and a few odd volumes*, yet we have plenty of Psalters, Catechisms, and some religious tracts. It would certainly be a great mercy to have Gaelic Bibles somewhat plenty among them. Many could pay for them, but many others could not, especially of the late emigrants, who are very numerous. If you could send me fifty copies, or any other number gratis, for the use of the latter, I would distribute them as faithfully as I could. If you could send me fifty copies for sale, I would send you the pay as soon as I could, though I cannot now mention the exact time. More might be sent for afterwards, if these were found productive of the expected advantage. Our neighbour Province of New Brunswick is in considerable want of Bibles.

May the great author of the Scriptures bless the Society, and prosper their endeavours, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified.

I am, Dear Sir,
Yours, most sincerely,
James MacGregor.

The above exhibits in a striking point of view the scarcity of the Scriptures in Gaelic, even at the beginning of this century. Similar destitution existed in the Highlands of Scotland. The Society, which had just published a version of the Scriptures in Gaelic, promptly met his request, and large supplies of the Scriptures both in Gaelic and English were forwarded. In the year 1808 we find Bibles and Testaments sent on his recommendation to Mr. Mortimer for sale, and in the same year we find reported among the Society's operations, a grant of 500 Bibles and Testaments in Gaelic to Nova Scotia and Canada. A portion of these were sent to him, and the Secretary says, in a letter: "Of those entrusted to your care, the Committee voted them for sale or gratuitous distribution, according to your discretion; therefore if you can find persons desirous of a Bible, who are too poor to purchase one at a reduced price, you have a discretion to give them one, although if they pay but a trifle for it, they would take greater care of it, and perhaps read it oftener than if it were given to them gratis."

From the manner in which the last mentioned grant is mentioned, as well as from some of the correspondence, it would almost appear as if the committee considered Nova Scotia as somewhere in the back-woods of Canada, and Quebec on the direct route to it. The following extract of a letter of the Doctor's, written probably in 1812, regarding another lot, seems to indicate this, or at all events shows the difficulty of communication at that time.

On February 7th, I received yours of May 20th, 1811. The duplicate I received some time before. The books are still in Quebec. They were put on board the brig Peggy, Cap. Richard Smith, for Halifax. She met with a violent gale, and had to go back to Quebec in distress, and there she stayed all winter, but we expect her early in summer. As the harbour of Quebec is frozen four or five months in the year, and as the communication between Nova Scotia and Quebec is not frequent even in summer, it is easier for us to get any thing from London than from Quebec. If the Society should have occasion to send us any more books the better way will be to wait for a vessel bound for Halifax, or Pictou. I have gotten information that the most part of the Peggy's cargo was damaged, but that the books narrowly escaped. May kind Providence watch over them

still. I spoke to Mortimer's clerk, (himself not being at home,) concerning the books sent him in 1808. His excuse was, that it is not their custom to pay for consignments till they are sold, and that these books were not sold till very lately, owing to their not having the metre Psalms, but he said they would be paid now.

When these Bibles arrived they excited the greatest interest. Persons, whose recollection extends that far back, describe the scene, when they were opened, as like the gathering, which we may sometimes see in our villages, of boys crowding around an apple-cart.

We may mention here that so well known and appreciated were his attainments as a Gaelic scholar, that when this society published their first edition, they requested him to give it a careful revision, and mark any errors that he might observe. We find the following in a letter from the Secretary, under date, 25th September, 1810:

"You will oblige the Committee by sending to me your list of errata in the Gaelic Bible, by a spring packet, and should any others be afterward observed by you, the list of them may follow."

He accordingly examined it with great care, and made a considerable list of errata, as appears from the following extract of a letter written about the year 1812:

"The above list is doubtless incomplete. Few of the errata will disturb a common reader. If I observe more, I will mark them. In two or three instances I was guided only by my own knowledge of the language. Eccl. xii. 6, and Isa. li. 6, seem wrong in the first edition, and though it is pretty evident that they are typographical mistakes, yet, as I would wish no dependence to be had on my judgment, I would like these instances to be referred to better judges. There is another erratum which I have marked, in about 300 places, and I doubt not but it occurs much oftener; for it is so small that it was long before I noticed it. It is an apostrophe, which in certain situations stands for the possessive pronoun *his*, and is placed before the word with which the possessive agrees. It is a late improvement, and useful, but many readers will not notice it. In the London Edition it is omitted oftener than it is printed, before the Proverbs; but after that book I observed one omission only. I have made a separate list of these."

From an early period too, he began to raise subscriptions

among his people for the promotion of the objects of the society. We find a letter from the Secretary of the Institution, acknowledging a letter from him of 4th of June, 1809, enclosing a bill for £80 sterling, and referring also to one previously sent for £64. These sums were, doubtless, in part sent as payment for copies of the Scriptures sold, but old persons recollect that about the year 1808 or 1809, he called on them, and having set before them what the Institution was doing, appealed to them for a contribution, to promote its objects, which they gave. So that a portion of these remittances, we cannot say how much, was given as a free contribution.

At length after a consultation among the brethren it was resolved to form a society, for the more efficient carrying out of the objects of the institution, and a meeting was held at the West River for the purpose. He preached on the occasion from 2 Thess. iii. 1.—"That the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified." The following, which contains a rough sketch of the first part of his sermon on the occasion, may be worthy of preservation:

"That the word of the Lord might have free course and be glorified was the great desire of the apostle Paul. To this end all his endeavours were directed, for he knew that the Holy Scriptures alone were able to make sinners wise unto salvation through faith that is in Christ Jesus. This is the river that makes glad the city of our God, and it was the desire of the apostle, that it might flow in an even channel gladdening the nations to the ends of the earth. The word of the Lord has free course when instead of being neglected or opposed, it is rightly received as the saving and sanctifying truth of God; and it is glorified, when its life and power are displayed in the humble, holy, and lovely conversation of true believers. Such a conversation glorifies the word, &c. No other cause is adequate to produce such an effect.

"We all ought to imitate Paul in his strong and active zeal to give free course to the word of the Lord. Our zeal must be languid indeed, if it is not animated and encouraged by the present appearance of Providence. Who does not rejoice at the strong and rapid course which is given to the word of the Lord in our day, especially since the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society? How great things has it done in a few years! What a grand prospect does it open to our view! and who would not wish it a thousand times stronger than it is, that it might circulate the Scriptures * * among the hundreds of millions who inhabit the globe?

"To give you a clearer idea of the propriety of forming ourselves into a Bible Society, that we may have the honour of contributing a share in helping forward the work of the Lord, we shall, I. give you a general idea of the course which the word of the Lord has to run, II. What is now doing to give it a course, and III. some encouraging considerations.

"The Scriptures themselves show that the word of the Lord must have a course till it reaches the ends of the earth. God hath given Christ the Heathen. All the ends of the earth shall, &c. All kings shall serve him, Hab. ii. 14; Mal. i. 11.

"God has divided the earth into four grand divisions, Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. Three of these, Europe, Africa, and America, are supposed to contain in round numbers, one hundred and fifty millions each, and Asia five hundred millions. We would not vouch for the accuracy of these computations, but they may serve the purpose. It is probable that there are more Jews and Mahometans in Europe than there are Christians in Asia and Africa. But supposing them equal, we have in these three divisions one hundred and fifty millions of Christians, and six hundred and fifty millions of heathen. Suppose America to contain fifty millions of heathen and one hundred millions, perhaps it were enough to say fifty millions of Christians, then we have a total of seven hundred millions without a Bible. From the researches of the British and Foreign Bible Society, it appears, that in a portion of the Russian empire, there are four hundred thousand families without a Bible. Hence some judgment may be formed of other parts of the empire. In several of the Provinces, on the European continent, Bibles are very scarce, partly by the poverty of the people (such poverty as we can hardly conceive) to which the scourge of war has contributed; and partly through want of zeal and exertion in the clergy. Even in England, Bibles are scarcer than any one would have imagined.—*Ed. Rep.* p. 15.

"It is not to be supposed that Bibles are more plentiful on the continent of America than in Europe, for the comparative disadvantages of the former are great. Not to mention the Roman Catholics, it is well known that the Protestants in the inland parts of the continent, and in all new settlements, are in great want of Bibles. Even in Philadelphia Bibles are very scarce. —*Bible Report*, p. 50.

"Thus it appears that the proportion of mankind which enjoys the Bible is very small compared with those who are without that precious trust. Here then is a large field to be occupied, a long course which the Bible has to run."

A Society was accordingly formed, embracing the whole county, with a committee of directors, consisting of so many from each congregation. A series of rules was drawn up for the management of its affairs. These regulations were very good, but they were never carried out. The Society never met

again, and the committee held only two or three meetings, and with the exception that members of the committee acted as collectors in their quarters, the whole business of the Society devolved upon him. In fact it used to be said, that he was the Society. He was clerk and kept any minutes that were kept, —he was secretary and conducted all the correspondence,—he was acting treasurer, receiving the money collected and making all the remittances,—he was distributing agent, and in his own quarter salesman, and often he acted as collector. Besides by his fervent addresses throughout the church, he awakened the liberality of the people.

His zeal was successful. In the first year the sum of £75 sterling was raised, of which £50 was remitted as a free contribution, and £25 to purchase Bibles and Testaments. In the second year, £50 was collected, all of which was sent as a free contribution. In the third year, £75 was remitted as a free contribution. After this contributions diminished, but every year something was sent home, and almost every year a considerable number of copies of the Scriptures were imported.

To give an idea of his addresses we shall insert here part of the rough draft of one of them:

"They have roused the slumbering zeal of Christians far and wide, and animated them to act with surprising energy in the grand undertaking. Pious people never looked upon the British and Foreign Bible Society with indifference, but probably not one even of its founders ever expected to see it an object so universally interesting, as it already appears. It was a voluntary association of private individuals. It may do a considerable good (they probably thought,) but at home it is not very hard for any one that wishes it to get a Bible, and abroad they can have no influence to achieve any thing very mighty. But the Society received daily accessions of strength, and their transactions became daily more interesting, people's hopes were more and more raised, and new assistance poured in from all quarters. They undertook to publish twenty thousand Gaelic Bibles, ten thousand Gaelic Testaments, for enlightening the benighted Highlands of Scotland, and the same number in Welsh, for the benefit of Wales, and they remitted several considerable sums to Germany, Switzerland, Russia, &c., for distributing Bibles. By and by they began to send parcels of Bibles abroad to several of the Eastern nations in their own tongues, and also to the East and West Indies, and to the British colonies; and at home they have poured their treasures into the laps of the poor.

"And what was much more than all the rest, they published many letters from their correspondents abroad, giving a most affecting account of the state of the Continent for want of Bibles, and the eager desire of many to get them, and joy at receiving them, and their gratitude to the people who so cared for their souls. These accounts touched the hearts of British Christians; and as the committee approved themselves men of most vivid zeal and energy, as well as unspotted integrity, they gained the entire confidence of the public. Hence we need not wonder, that their funds increased with unexampled rapidity. The idea of Auxiliary Societies was taken up, and they are already multiplied to two hundred. These provided for the wants of their respective vicinities, and eased the parent society of a considerable part of their burden, which was very requisite on account of the great increase of business; and each auxiliary poured its own tributary stream into the main river of the funds. There are also a kind of sub-auxiliaries or branch societies, consisting of smaller associations in country villages, contributing their mite to the nearest auxiliary. Still less than these, are the penny societies, consisting most commonly of day labourers, and in some instances of servant maids, associating together and contributing a penny per week each, out of their own scanty earnings. Somewhat similar to these are other associations, in some of the larger towns, of persons whose narrow circumstances suffer them not to become direct members, yet who are willing to contribute according to their circumstances. In London each member of this association commences with a donation not less than seven shillings, and continues to pay not less than a sixpence, nor more than a shilling per month. Thus all ranks contribute with alacrity. Of the rich some give fifty, an hundred, nay a thousand pounds at once, others two, three, five, ten guineas annually. Scholars at school in some instances give a half-penny per week. Housewives give the savings of their economy, and ladies their rings and jewels.

"But it is not in Britain alone that they have auxiliaries. In Europe there are the societies of Stockholm, Berlin, and Basle, of great utility to them in publishing and circulating the Scriptures in the different languages of Europe. There is in Ratisbon a Roman Catholic Bible Society, who are publishing a fifth edition of the New Testament. The horrors of war hitherto greatly cramped the operations of these societies, but peace will return, and then they shall flourish, and perhaps beget hundreds more around them. The example is followed with alacrity in the United States, no less than sixteen Bible Societies having been formed there more than two years ago; but the demon of war doubtless hinders their multiplication and their utility in a great degree.

"But the most useful perhaps of all the Foreign Societies is the corresponding committee in Bengal, not merely because there the Oriental translations are carried on; the port of Calcutta is the annual resort of multitudes from all quarters, for the purposes of trade, and affords opportunities of disseminating the Scriptures far and near.

"They have taught and exemplified the great lesson of harmony and unanimity. Never before did the world see a society composed of persons

from so many denominations of religion, unanimous in the prosecution of one design. Never before did the world see a society so favoured and supported by all parties of the religious public. Who would not be pleased to see above two thousand persons from the various religious denominations about London, assembled in one apartment, to devise and consult about giving free course to the word of the Lord, without a word of dispute, but with smiles of love and joy in every countenance? By circulating the Scriptures without note or comment, they have exactly hit the point, which secures unanimity; for though Christians cannot agree about the meaning of Scripture, they all agree that the Scripture is the word of God, and infallible truth showing the way of salvation. Therefore all are desirous of its universal circulation. The Scripture is a rallying point for Christians. What will they agree about at all, if they agree not to circulate the Scriptures without any other limits than those of the earth?

"But the Bible Society is said to be the occasion of much difference in opinion, which leads to controversy, which again leads to bitterness and strife. This is an accusation we did not expect, and we hope it cannot be proved. People very fond of disputing will find occasion to do so, when none is given. We ask what real occasion does the circulation of the pure word of God, which is the sole business of Bible Societies, afford for difference of opinion, controversy, strife, or bitterness. An avaricious man, who cannot part with his money, seeing his neighbour subscribe liberally feels himself condemned, and must in self-defence, abuse the Society. A peevish churchman, who cannot bear to see a dissenter distribute a Bible, or *vice versa*, must in like manner inveigh against it; so must all clergymen, whose people disregard their public warning against it, and, following the dictates of their own conscience, give it their countenance and support, but in all such cases the Society is innocent. One may venture to say, that there is little disputing of this sort in the Diocese of Bristol, in the Diocese of Durham, and others, because in these places, the Bishops, the clergy, the laity, the dissenters, are all of one mind to promote the circulation of the Bible. In Scotland, no controversy has been heard of, because all go one way in this cause. But we are sure of a controversy in this Province, for the people, especially those of the Church of England, are plunged into it by a warning, a strange warning that professed to guard against it. Many of these will not obey that warning, because their hearts are full of sympathy for the poor Christians in Europe, who cannot procure a Bible, and for the poor heathen, who know not that there is a Bible, and they contribute, "according as God hath prospered them." Many others will choose to follow the dictates of their spiritual guides, and leave their fellow creatures, without making any effort for their relief But there would be no disputes in this Province, unless with a few peevish individuals, which would not affect the public, had Doctor Inglis addressed the members of the Church of England, to the following purpose:

Members of the Church of England:—Like others we have been negligent to a fault in circulating the Scriptures. We have too long left the millions of heathens in Asia, Africa, and America, lying in darkness

unpitied, unrelieved. Millions more of our fellow-Protestants and others on the Continent of Europe, unable through poverty and oppression to obtain a Bible, we have left too long to languish without its consolations. There are multitudes in our mother country, and not a few in this Province, who, notwithstanding the exertions of the Society for promoting Christian knowledge, are still destitute of the sacred Scriptures. But God is now rising to visit the world in mercy, and to send his salvation to the ends of the earth, by means of a society in London, which extends its branches thoughout the United Kingdom, for the simple and grand purpose of giving the Bible to all mankind. They have already made the Scriptures more plentiful throughout the British dominions, and through all the kingdoms of Europe; they have expended above £6000 in translating the Scriptures into the language of Asia, and they have in contemplation to extend as soon as possible the same boon to the Africans and the American Indians. It is the glory of our mother country to have given birth to this peerless society. May it be the glory of our church to be its greatest support. Brethren, let us no longer earn the wo doomed to "those who are at ease in Zion." Let us rise and help. Let us draw out our souls to those our poor neighbours. Let each cheerfully contribute his mite according to ability. Whatever other burdens we have to bear, we shall not be less able to bear them, that we engage heartily in this work of the Lord. If we altogether hold our peace, deliverance and enlargement will arise from other quarters, but we must be under the displeasure of God for refusing our help. Brethren, it is pleasant to join with our fellow-creatures of all religions, in a work so evidently to the glory of God, and the happiness of mankind.

"Ministers of the Church of England, your countenance I confidently expect. You will not only excite your people to this duty, but you will set them the example of a liberal contribution. Providence is bountiful to you. Imitate his bounty, by helping to circulate the Bible to the ends of the earth.

"An address in this spirit would more become a clergyman and a Christian, would tend to peace and harmony, in support of the Bible Society, and in all probability, would not lessen, but increase the collections for the Society for promoting Christian knowledge; for the public mind would naturally expand to meet his generous disposition, whereas, now it will as naturally contract with his narrow views. It is sufficiently ascertained that the liberality of the public grows along with the increase of societies for the public good."

The following is one of his own outlines of another address:

Benefits of the Bible Society.

1. It gives the Bible to many at home and abroad, who otherwise would not have it.

2. It strengthens the zeal, the prayers, and the comforts of its friends.

3. It produces unanimity, reconciliation, and love among Christians, that were alienated from one another.

4. It enlarges Christian acquaintance, being productive of much correspondence between Christians at home and abroad.

5. It gives opportunity to individuals, who otherwise would not have it, of doing good by the little pittance which they can spare.

6. It affords an honourable employment to individuals by printing.

7. It softens the horrors of war, giving to enemies the best of gifts.

8. It strengthens other societies, as the Missionary and Religious Tract Societies.

9. It produces other societies, as the Society for supporting Gaelic Schools,—schools in Ireland, &c.

10. It may be a lengthening out of the national prosperity.

These extracts will serve to show his interest in the institution. In fact his whole soul was thrown into the efforts on its behalf. Its annual reports he read with an almost childish delight, his own contribution was always liberal, and he early taught his children to contribute their offerings. Indeed he seemed to have it ever before his mind. When others would propose plans involving what he deemed unnecessary expense, his reply would be a proposal of a way to save the money, adding, "and we can give it to the Bible Society." "It is truly gratifying to me to hear of the Hibernian Society, and the circulating Gaelic schools. Both institutions are most likely to be very beneficial to ignorant souls. But oh, the Bible Society! how matchless, how salutary! Gathering strength as it moves on, discovering and dispelling darkness and misery. Surely this is the marvellous work of God."

To this zeal we believe may be attributed the fact that the British and Foreign Bible Society has always been supported more liberally in this county than in any other county of the Province.

But while the Bible Society, above all other institutions, engaged his sympathies, his attention was by no means confined to it, and the efforts which he made on behalf of the other missionary undertakings of the day, show him to have been a man not only quite abreast of the age, but in his views and desires far ahead of that portion of the church in which he was. The

first efforts of this kind that we shall notice, though the measure did not originate with him, was raising money to send home to the parent church, to defray the expense of preachers coming to this country. Previously congregations that were vacant had raised money to pay the passage money of preachers, but an effort was made now by the Presbytery, and the congregations having settled ministers, to raise money to repay the Home Synod for past advances as well as to relieve them from any future expenses. The following account of the effort is from the Christian Magazine, for 1809:

By letters received from Nova Scotia, we learn that in the course of last year, a motion was agitated in the Associate Presbytery of Pictou, to apply to the General Synod for more preachers. Against this proposal an opposition was started by some of the members, and Mr. MacCulloch in particular, declared that he would consider it as his duty to protest, unless a general application were first made to their own congregations, to repay the Synod at least a small part of the sums they had advanced on behalf of that country. He could see no reason why they, in that Province, without either taxes or war, and some of them in affluence, should not concur with others for the propagation of the gospel. It was accordingly agreed that they should attempt to establish a small fund for the advancement of religion by various means; and desirous of contributing their own share to so good a work, and to set their people an example, they began by laying a considerable assessment on themselves. The members of Presbytery were then appointed to lay the views of the Court, every one before his own congregation, and appeal to their benevolence. This was accordingly done, and their people instantly and very generously acceded to their views. The three congregations in the district of Pictou have collected about £160 currency, or about £144 sterling. The return had not been made from two ministers who lay at a considerable distance, but it was not expected to be so much. In Pictou they have had a very great trade last year, which has made money more plentiful than ever it was before, and enabled them to contribute so liberally for the propagation of the gospel. On account of the expense attending the first settlement of a minister, they have not applied to Mr. Gordon's congregation in Prince Edward Island.

At last meeting of Presbytery, it was agreed that the £100, that is £90 sterling should be remitted to the Synod. Mr. MacCulloch has accordingly transmitted to the Rev. Mr. Ferrier, Paisley, the first part of a bill of exchange for this sum. The Presbytery would gladly have transmitted more, if it could have been done without interfering with their other plans. Mr. MacCulloch trusts, however, that their remittances in future will be both more regular and more abundant than formerly.

The Presbytery of Pictou are also desirous that some standing committee were appointed by the Synod, as a medium of communication between them. They wish to be made acquainted with Synodical occurrences, and are willing to pay for a regular report; and they think also that it might tend to the advancement of religion among them, were the Synod at a little more pains to ascertain their real situation.

Another subject which had for years engaged the attention of the brethren, was the obtaining ministers to supply the spiritual destitution around them. The inadequacy of the supply from Scotland, after repeated and earnest applications, had led them to consider the propriety and practicability of training ministers in this country. As early as the year 1805, it was proposed to establish an institution for that purpose, and a society was formed for its support. Subscriptions were accordingly taken throughout the county. We have before us the list on the East River, which is headed by Doctor MacGregor, with a subscription of £20, "provided the Harbour congregation pay me the sixteen pounds which they owe me." Others follow with subscriptions of £10. Writing on the 31st October of that year, he says:

"The increasing demand for ministers seems to intimate the necessity of raising them in this country. The great expense of every thing here renders this undertaking next to hopeless in our circumstances, yet Mr. MacCulloch, who started the idea, has sanguine hopes. Pictou people have subscribed about £1000, a more liberal subscription than they were well able to pay. We expect some money from the Province Treasury, if we give our seminary a little name, as not rivalling the University which Government has established. We expect great assistance from Britain and Ireland. We intend to send Mr. MacCulloch home to beg. I fear it will produce but few ministers in my day, but I do not think it improper to make a beginning, for it is highly probable that it will succeed by degrees and be very beneficial to posterity."

The project did not succeed at that time, but we find from several of his letters that it was not lost sight of. From the following extracts, it will be seen that the measure was still kept in view, and that something was done toward it, by placing promising young men under the instruction of the members of Presbytery, and by raising funds to aid and support them.

Thus writing to Mr. Gilfillan, under date, 4th December, 1810, he says:

"We have no hope of an adequate supply of ministers to the church here, from the Synod. Our plan must be to raise ministers for ourselves, and yet our ability is so small, that we have little hope of success for a good while to come. We have begun as low as possible. Mr. Ross has, at present, a young lad begun to learn Latin, with a view to the ministry. We think we could find finances for carrying on four students at a time, if their parents would help moderately. But we hardly expect to find students for some time. The thing is new here. Our plan is to appoint one of ourselves to teach them the languages, and in place of lectures on philosophy, to collect a small library of books in history, and the most useful sciences, make them read these, and help them by frequent examination and directions to get as good a view of them as we can, and perhaps a few lectures on Divinity. To accustom them to compose, we mean to give them subjects of discourse from time to time, beginning at an early period and continuing all along."

Again he says in writing to Dr. Keir, under date, 6th October, 1814:

"We are also contemplating the formation of an Academy at Pictou, for the purpose of general learning, and especially of raising a ministry among ourselves. We already feel that Scotland cannot provide for us, and we doubt not it will be less and less able in all time coming. Want of ministers has already lost Cumberland to the Presbyterians, Miramichi to the Secession, and Halifax to the Antiburghers. For the same reason Merigomish and Shubenacadie are still vacant, and other congregations prevented from coming into existence.

"But an Academy is a matter of such magnitude, that we do not well know how to think of beginning it. However, it must be begun some time, and we think it better to do something, though we are weak, hoping that Providence will befriend it, and cause it to grow, rather than leave all to another and richer generation, lest that might be losing the opportunity of it, perhaps wholly. We think that if we had funds for maintaining two good Professors, we might hope they would send forth good scholars in different departments. We would need £400, if not £600 annually, as salary to these; and a good sum for the building, apparatus, and library. To raise money we propose to have a yearly collection in every congregation, to form a society of the most zealous friends, each member of which shall contribute at least twenty shillings yearly, and we hope that many religious people will bequeath it legacies in their testaments. What other helps Providence may provide I cannot say, but I hope the best.

"In the meantime Mr. Ross is teaching five boys the Greek and Latin, with a view to the ministry. To encourage people to send their sons, the

Presbytery promised to give their boys books and education gratis, and they have fulfilled their promise to the boys; but they are in debt to Mr. Ross, for they promised him thirty pounds annually for teaching. To discharge this debt we must make another collection in our congregations. And I am desired to give Mr. Pidgeon and you a broad hint, that a collection will be acceptable from your congregations. I think it reasonable they should contribute, for, hitherto, they have not been burdened with any thing for the ministry. None knows but the Island may be the first to reap the benefit of the ministers we raise. I am to write to Mr. Pidgeon, but you and he may consult. I have been too long in writing to you, for it would be agreeable to have the collection this fall, but if you find the fall too far gone before you get this, you can embrace the first opportunity."

Again he writes to the same brother, under date, 31st August, 1815:

"I much wonder that I have never heard from you since I saw you. This is the third letter from me to you. Along with one of them, I sent you and Mr. Pidgeon a parcel of tracts, Gaelic and English, which I know not whether they reached you or not. In one of these I informed you that we have five students under the charge of Mr. Ross, coming forward to the ministry. I likewise gave you a hint, that the Presbytery appointed a collection to be made in all their congregations, and that they expect you Island ministers would make it in yours. Of course I did not hear that you had made it. The design of it is, partly to indemnify Mr. Ross for his trouble, and partly to buy books for the boys to encourage them. Providence has been very kind to us, giving us peace and plenty, while our neighbours have had their friends slaughtered, their villages burned, and their fields plundered by war. We enjoy a pure dispensation of the gospel, but our posterity is like to be destitute of it. God is pouring out his spirit largely upon Christians of all denominations, almost all over the church, so that they are making wonderful exertions in favour of the Redeemer's kingdom. Such considerations as these should open our hearts and the hearts of our people, to contribute our mite to perpetuate the ministry in the Church of Christ. If therefore you did not make this collection in your congregation, or if you did not receive the former letter, in which I mentioned the collection, it will be proper for you to inform the Session of the Presbytery's design, and intimate the collection. The Presbytery composed an address showing the necessity and propriety of the measure. I cannot (at least, at present) take the trouble of transcribing and transmitting this address to you. But you can compose one if you see it needful. The Presbytery does not expect great things from your congregation, but it is proper that they should do a little, that they may have a hand in the work of the Lord. Besides it is possible that they may enjoy the fruits of this institution, as soon as any of our congregations."

We are not aware to what extent these collections were made, but soon the academy was established, of which we shall have to speak in a future chapter.

Another measure in which he engaged at this time was the circulation of religious tracts. Having received some Gaelic tracts from Scotland he wrote the following appeal addressed to the Secretary of the Edinburgh Tract Society:

Dear Sir:—By the recommendation of Mr. Daniel Anderson, who was lately a teacher in Edinburgh and acquainted with you, I have been induced to send you these lines, the design of which is to solicit your aid and exertion to obtain a parcel of Gaelic religious tracts for distribution among our countrymen here. There are many thousands of Highlanders, formerly and of late, in this and the neighbouring Provinces and Islands. In Pictou there are several thousands of Highlanders, I have sixteen hundred souls of them in my congregation, on one river called the East River of Pictou. Mr. Ross has a large and scattered congregation of them, on the West River and Middle River of Pictou. He has indeed a considerable number in his congregation who do not understand the Gaelic, but mine are almost all Highlanders. North from Pictou, about twenty miles distant, lies Prince Edward Island, formerly called St. John's Island, in which there are seven or eight thousand Highland souls, of which a considerable number are Roman Catholics. These have a Highland priest, but the Protestants get no preaching in their native tongue, but from Mr. Ross or me, who visit them occasionally. East from Pictou on the shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, in this Province, there are between three and four thousand of them, mostly Roman Catholics. Through a great part of this Province, there is a mixture of Highlanders. Many are settled in Cape Breton Island, and in the Province of New Brunswick. Except Mr. Ross and me, there are no ministers in all these parts, who preach regularly in Gaelic. There is a Mr. Farquharson about eighty miles from Pictou, one of the Tabernacle preachers lately come out, who does it occasionally. In this Province, the great body of Roman Catholics are by themselves; in Prince Edward Island, they are more mixed with Protestants. Very few of the Roman Catholics are any way desirous of religious instruction, though I believe they are more diligent to put their children to school, than to teach them at home. The Protestants are pretty diligent to educate their children, but education is much more expensive here than at home, not only because labour in general is higher priced, but because the population is so thin and the country so wild, rugged, and destitute of roads, that it is difficult to collect so many in one place, as is sufficient to support a schoolmaster. From this statement you may easily conceive, that religious knowledge cannot abound among our countrymen here. Many of them are wofully careless; but they also want opportunity. Gaelic books are very scarce. Of late we have got a sufficient supply of

Gaelic Bibles and Testaments very cheap from the Bible Society in London; four hundred Bibles and six hundred Testaments have come to Pictou, and one hundred Bibles and four hundred Testaments to Prince Edward Island. We can have more as we need them. The Religious Tract Society in London sent us one thousand copies of *Crubhionn do'n Scriobtur, &c.*,* which is a sufficient supply. We have also a sufficient supply at present of Mr. Campbell's "*Smuaintean cud thromacha mubhas agus fhulangas an to Slanuighir.*"† I have also some dozens of "*Erail do'n Chloinn ata a feitheamh an Scolibh Sabard.*"‡ I got some years ago two or three dozen of "*Firridnibh scilleir*,"§ and a dozen of "*Watts' Tearmunn do'n orgridh, &c.;*"‖ but they are all gone. I have sent again and again to the Glasgow booksellers for them, but they never got them. They would be particularly useful to the young generation. Other small tracts I know not: doubtless there are large treatises of which I have not heard. If you could have influence enough to send me ten pounds worth, and one half of them *gratis*, I would by the first opportunity repay you the other five pounds. All the later emigrants are poor, having had a great sum to pay for their passage, and every thing to begin anew here; and unless they get books for nothing, they cannot get them at all. I would be much obliged to you if would take the trouble of sending me a list of all the Gaelic books published within these twenty years, and a copy of each religious book except the above. Is there a dictionary published besides Shaw's? If there is, what is the price of it? What bookseller in Glasgow deals most in Gaelic books, for it is most convenient for us to deal with Glasgow? I have written to Mr. J., for a parcel of English tracts. I understand that he has the success of the gospel at heart; you will be good enough to consult him. I hope you and he will be able to do something for those dispersed in this wide wilderness, and though men should not pay you, God will not forget such a labour of love; you will direct to me to the care of Mortimer, Liddel & Co., Pictou, Nova Scotia.

Praying that the grace of the Lord may abound toward you, I remain,

Yours, sincerely,

JAMES MACGREGOR.

P. S. Is "*Alleine's Earail dhurach dach*,"** in print?—perhaps it may be preferable to send us a considerable variety of tracts or books, rather than a great number of copies of a few sorts.

Upon this appeal the Committee remark in the Christian Magazine for March, 1810:

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* A portion of Scripture.

† Campbell's Thoughts on the Sufferings and Death of Christ.

‡ An Address to the Children who attend Sabbath Schools.

§ Plain Truth.

‖ Watt's Help for Youth.

** Alleine's Alarm to the Unconverted.

The above letter has lately been received by the Clerk of the Edinburgh Tract Society, and was taken in consideration by their Committee, who have resolved to send to Doctor MacGregor, a number of copies of the only Gaelic tract published by the Society. But as they conceive the importance of the case demands greater aid than the present state of their funds can furnish, it was judged proper to solicit subscriptions from those approving of the measure, for the special purpose of printing and distributing *gratis* a selection of good tracts, in the Gaelic language. The Society are already in possession of translations of several of their tracts, and can easily procure others, when necessary. The only thing wanted is means to defray the expense, and for this they look to the friends of religion. Whatever sum the Society is entrusted with, shall be faithfully devoted to that purpose.

As the result of this appeal, the Committee sent him at least one grant of tracts, for gratuitous distribution, to the number of five thousand in Gaelic and eleven hundred in English, the receipt and disposal of which is thus described in a letter from him dated 20th Nov., 1812:

Your letter of July 31st came duly to hand, and the Gaelic and English tracts without any damage. Permit me to say, that I, and many others here, are under special obligations to the Religious Tract Society for their exertions on our behalf. Having received a few Gaelic tracts, sent by the Rev. Alexander Stewart, now in Dingwall, I thought they must have been published by the Religious Tract Society, and that they must have had a variety of others, besides those I had gotten. Had I known the real state of matters, I certainly would not have troubled the Society, for I could not have hoped that they would have been at the pains to translate tracts for our sakes. But now I see the wise and gracious hand of God overruling the matter for the good of my countrymen, both at home and abroad. I have already distributed the greatest part of the tracts; I have given one of each kind of the Gaelic tracts to every family in my own congregation, even to the families who cannot read them, upon their promising to employ a neighbour visiting them, or a traveller lodging with them, to read them.

I have also sent to Mr. Ross a copy for every family in his congregation. I have sent parcels to five different settlements at a considerable distance within the Province; a large parcel to Prince Edward Island, and a few to one settlement in Cape Breton: and I intend to send more after them by the first opportunity. With regard to the English tracts, I find that a faithful distribution of them is a matter of greater difficulty than I expected; for, on the one hand, people who are beyond the reach

of ministers have clearly most need of them, and there are plenty of such people here; but among these there is more danger of their lying by unused. On the other hand, though those that are within reach of their ministers have less need of them because they have the benefit of preaching, yet they are more desirous of them, and to appearance they will improve them better. I am often at a loss what to do; however, I have not yet absolutely refused any that applied. I mean to distribute them all *gratis;* but I have been telling a few of my neighbours who I know are not poor, that we should send some little token of gratitude to the Society; accordingly I have gotten a few dollars, but that generous spirit which works so powerfully and so beautifully in Great Britain, has yet to awake in this quarter; and it is to be feared, that the many hindrances which flow from the infant state of the country will prevent its awaking, or, at any rate, its acting with vigour for a considerable time to come. For my own part, I should think it an honour to assist the zealous efforts of the Societies in Britain, for sending the truths of the gospel among the nations; but, when I look around I see ten times more to do than I can do. For one thing, there is a continual demand for supply of sermon from scattered settlements all round, that are so weak that they cannot support ministers for themselves. At Truro, about fifty miles distant from my residence, we have formed a Society which is partly a Bible, and partly a Tract Society, our strength is small, and we can only say that we have made a beginning; but I hope, through grace, that we shall grow stronger, and be of some benefit to the destitute people around us. As to the utility of tracts, I can give no accounts of conversions occasioned by them; but I have no doubt of their great utility. They are universally relished by God's people; and this being the case, they cannot but be edified by them. They contain the most precious truths of the gospel expressed with force and perspicuity; there is such a beautiful harmony runs through them, though doubtless they have been composed at different times and places, that I think they cannot miss being useful to every one who loves the truth. I know likewise that they have been useful to thoughtless and ignorant persons, so far as to make them consider and reform in part, though I cannot say what the issue may be. But though it is desirable for the Society to see the fruit of their labours, yet, I think, they may safely rest their cause with God, and say, "Surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God."

But it was not in America alone that his countrymen were the objects of his solicitude. He heard with deep interest, of every effort made for the spiritual welfare of the Highlanders in Scotland. His sympathy with such measures will appear by the following draft of a letter, written in 1814, to a friend in Scotland, which was accompanied with a contribution of £60 sterling to the Gaelic School Society.

A Mr. Ferguson, North Bridge, having a commission to send me some religious tracts, sent me also some reports of societies, and particularly the report of the Society for supporting Schools in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. The more I consider this Institution the more I am filled with admiration at the divine goodness toward my poor countrymen. I take this to be the most merciful Providence that ever befell them, unless perhaps the plenty of ministers among them. Notwithstanding the ministers, multitudes of them continue to this day, in almost heathen darkness. But I hope, however, that now a light is getting in among them, that will enlighten every corner of the Highlands, and that shall shine unto the last day. I think it my duty to aid, as much as I can, the efforts of this truly honourable and benevolent Society. I have gone round among my friends and neighbours, and collected more than I expected, though less than I wish. I request you to give it to the Treasurer of the Society. Mr. Mortimer is at present in Halifax at the Assembly. As my collection was not ready when he went away, I agreed with him to send this letter after him, and that he should enclose a draft for the sum upon some of his correspondents in your favour. I send a list of the donors' names with the sums given by each, that they may be published in the Society's report. My main design herein is to stir up backward Highlanders at home, and many places abroad where the reports may come, to follow their example. Doubtless there are many patriotic Highlanders and others in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, and many other places on the Continent of America, in the East and West Indies, in Africa, &c., who would cheerfully aid the Society, if there were proper persons to solicit donations. These the Society may find. I expect to send you some pounds more after some time, from persons who cannot conveniently give it, and persons of whom I cannot conveniently solicit at present. We mean to try to set up Gaelic schools here, and hope to get a number of adults to learn. The Roman Catholics are not so much inclined to learn to read Gaelic. Will you be good enough to request the Committee or desire the Treasurer to send me eighty Gaelic books, &c., on credit, till I can sell them, or otherwise find the means to pay for them? I expect a parcel of tracts from the Religious Tract Society, and if you contrive that the Gaelic Spelling books, &c., if they are given, and the tracts should be sent off together, it would be a favour. May the Lord keep his powerful and good hand about these great and good Societies in Britain, calculated to give "free course to the word of the Lord that it may be glorified."

Besides these we find a letter from the Secretary of the London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews, dated 15th May, 1815, acknowledging the sum of £11 17*s.* sterling as a contribution to its funds, from the females in Pictou.

Nor was there any thing of sectarian feeling in the interest

with which he regarded efforts for the promotion of the Redeemer's kingdom. He rejoiced particularly in those institutions, in which Evangelical Christians of different denominations might unite. He watched with interest the labours of the missionaries of other names, weeping with them in their trials and rejoicing in their success. This was particularly manifested when tidings of the labours and trials of Judson fell upon the ears of the Church. He then gave a practical exhibition of his sympathy with them, by laying the matter before the benevolent in his congregation, and the result was a contribution of £50 to the Baptist Mission in Burmah.

The facts and documents just given will be sufficient to show the deep interest which he took in the Christian enterprises of the day, and his activity on their behalf. Such an interest is quite common now, but it was far from being so at that time. Such exertions are now expected as part of the regular efforts of the church. But at that time, in the church here at least, the interest of the people in such movements had to be created. They required to be informed as to the nature of such undertakings, and to be instructed *ab initio* in the duty of Christian liberality. This had to be done under great disadvantages, from the state of the country as already mentioned, but also from the fact of many of his people being Highlanders, who had never been taught to give in their own country, either for the support or the extension of the gospel. When all the circumstances of the case are considered, we think that his success was wonderful.

In these efforts he was cordially supported by his brethren, particularly Mr. Ross and Doctor MacCulloch; but we believe we do no injustice to these brethren, when we say that Doctor MacGregor was yet the mainspring of all these movements. In fact the superior intensity of his zeal and activity in advancing them was acknowledged by all. The following amusing incident may illustrate the extent, to which his mind was absorbed by such objects. Returning from a meeting of Synod at Truro, in company with the brethren of the Presbytery, they entered

a house at Salmon River; and having sat down, he fell asleep. Doctor MacCulloch having called attention to the fact, Mr. J. Douglass, elder, said, "If you want to awaken him just begin talking about some religious society." Doctor MacCulloch laughed, but agreed to try, and commenced talking about a society for founding schools in Ireland. In the midst of the conversation, Doctor MacGregor spoke right out, saying, "Oh yes, we ought to do far more for that society than we are doing." All present burst into laughter.

Many of these measures originated with him, for all of them he set an eminent example of liberality himself, and he was particularly successful in exciting the interest of the people and in collecting contributions, so that he was good humoredly called the "prince of beggars." His success arose, however, not from any thing like dragooning the people, or by pressing importunity, but from his kindly manner of setting facts before them, and especially from his personal influence. Such was the veneration in which he was held, that in many instances a recommendation from him was sufficient to ensure a contribution. As the result of his efforts, this portion of the church became distinguished for the promptitude and, for their circumstances, the liberality, with which they contributed to the various benevolent enterprises of the day, and this character it has in a large measure retained till the present day.

CHAPTER XIX.

UNION AND DISUNION.—1815–1818.

"Behold how good and how pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."—Psal. cxxxiii. 1.

"Mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine ye have learned, and avoid them. For they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple."—Rom. xvi. 17, 18.

THE year 1815 was marked by two events of importance to him. The first was the arrival of two fellow-labourers, one of whom, the Rev. William Patrick, was settled in Merigomish, which had hitherto received occasional supply of preaching from him. The second was a mission of several weeks to some settlements in New Brunswick, on the very borders of the United States. He thus describes these events in a letter to the Rev. Samuel Gilfillan:

"This season we have had an accession of one minister and one preacher. Mr. Patrick came by Miramichi, three or four hundred miles north-west from Pictou. It was once under our inspection; but they left us, because we could do nothing for them. They got a Presbyterian minister, who is now dead. At present they have a Baptist preacher, though they hold infant Baptism almost necessary to salvation. Seeing Mr. Patrick, they have put themselves under our protection again. They will need two ministers, and will be a kind of centre for the sending of the gospel northward and southward for some distance. Mr. Patrick got a call from Merigomish very soon after his arrival in Pictou; he is now admitted. He is about sixteen miles eastward from my house, in a place where no minister ever was. I hope he will be a profit and a comfort to me;—before, I had no neighbour eastward. Mr. Patrick gets £150 of stipend; but our currency is one-tenth less than sterling, which reduces it fifteen pounds, and deficiencies of payment may reduce it ten pounds more, for here the payment is not so good as at home. The people are to make him a pres-

sent of £100 or £150, to help to build him a house and get him a piece of land. He will have his trials; for the people are little acquainted with the gospel, though in our neighbourhood. But there is a certain pleasure in ministering the gospel to a wild and uncultivated people, as their corrupt nature appears more in its native hue, and the fruits of a minister's labours are more easily discerned.

Mr. Crow is appointed to supply Mr. Dick's congregation during the winter. This congregation is now to be divided into two, as it is too extensive for one man; it will be sufficiently so for two, for a piece is to be added to each end. We will need another minister immediately for the other part of that congregation, otherwise it will be extremely difficult for us to dispose of Mr. Crow.

I was last summer a voyage and journey of 400 miles upon a missionary excursion to Passamaquoddy, on the west border of New Brunswick Province. I was called by about forty families of Highlanders, who went there twelve years ago, and have had no public ordinances which they could understand. I was away six Sabbaths,—two on the way, one going and one coming, and two with them. I dispensed both sacraments to them with great pleasure. You would wonder to see how regular they are. They meet every Sabbath for reading and praying in public; they meet every second Monday for prayer and religious conference. A clergyman of the Church of England, about sixty miles distant from them, and whom few of them understand, baptizes their children. They are 300 miles from any Presbyterian minister good or bad. During the other two weeks I preached in a number of places along the sides of the Bay. Excepting at Scoodic and St. Andrews, where there are Church of England clergymen, and which are small sea-ports, I had but small audiences, the country having been settled since the peace of 1783. Here I met with an old man, who had been baptized by Ebenezer Erskine! The Highland settlement, with the Presbyterians and others about Scoodic, think they could muster £100 currency annually for a minister, and that they could gradually increase it, till it should be enough. A man who could live a single life for some years might do with that sum. Another minister might make out bye-and-bye, in another part of the Bay.

From the time of the induction of Mr. Patrick, his home labours were confined to the East River. But in the same year, two churches were built at the Upper Settlement, one on the East Branch and the other on the West. So that he still had three places of preaching, and from the increase of population, the demands upon his time and labour were as clamant as ever.

Of his missionary tour in New Brunswick, the following is his own account:

"1815. I was at different times petitioned and importuned

to visit and aid, as I could, a settlement of Highlanders, near Scoodic River, on the very borders of the United States. I took my horse to Mr. Creelman's on the Shubenacadie, about fifty miles, and there I left him till I should return. There I took a passage aboard one of the vessels that carry plaster of Paris to the United States. She was bound to Eastport in Passamaquoddy Bay. The captain engaged to land me at Eastport, for he meant to call there. His vessel was heavy laden, and we had a good deal of high winds right ahead. Every wave overflowed, and often she seemed as if she could never recover herself. We had every incitement to prayer times without number. It pleased the Supreme Ruler at last to rebuke the wind, and to give us a beautiful slender breeze. We came on Saturday afternoon to anchor beside a small settlement on the New Brunswick side, the inhabitants of which were chiefly builders of small vessels. I was kindly invited to lodge at the first house we came to. I told the landlord I would be happy to preach on the following day, if they had no minister. He told me they had none, and he would warn them all, and he was sure they would all gladly come. They came almost all, and heard with apparent attention and concern. I endeavoured to lead them to the knowledge of themselves and of Christ the Saviour. I committed them to God, and the word of his grace, and left them much affected.

"We set sail by day-light on Monday morning. As we sailed along, we wondered at the barrenness of the shore, for scarcely was anything to be seen but rocks. When we came opposite to St. Johns, I could not see it distinctly, we were so far to sea. Though we were several leagues from land, yet when we came to the river, its channel formed a striking contrast to the ocean; a large stream of apparently fresh water keeping its course quite distinct from the sea-green on both its sides. We had a beautiful breeze all the way to Eastport, (so called as being the easternmost place in the United States.)* I got a pas-

* In his memoranda he says, "Stopped and preached midway between St. John's and Eastport." So that he seems to have gone ashore a second time

sage immediately, in a boat going to St. Andrew's, sixteen miles distant. There I was kindly entertained and lodged by Mr. Pagan, uncle to the Pagans in Pictou. Next day I hired a boat to Scoodic,* sixteen miles. I landed; and looking for a place to dine at, I chanced to see one of the Highlanders that sent for me. I introduced myself to him, and he told me he had a horse to carry me. We set off with little delay. Word of my arrival soon reached all of them, and most of them came next forenoon to see me.† Having come so far to see them, I told them I would do my best for their instruction and direction; and they must do their best to receive my instructions, and the blessing of God along with them. They said that no people needed instruction more than they; and they hoped that God had given them some sense of their need, and would give them more of it. They were very eager to receive instruction, and I wished to gratify them. I preached often, and talked often to them, in great and small companies. In every house

to preach. We have heard it described as follows: Being becalmed near the land, and seeing a number of houses on shore, he proposed to go ashore to preach. The captain agreed to the proposal and offered to accompany him, but said that if the wind should arise they must start, although he should be in the midst of his sermon. The Doctor demurred to this, but said he would only preach one short sermon. They went to the largest house they saw, and spoke to the occupants about preaching. The man agreed to collect as many people as he could, which being done, the Doctor preached to them. When sermon was over, he inquired if there was any sign of a wind, and there being none he went to dinner with the man at whose house he had called, but intimated that if there was no wind in half an hour, he would preach another sermon. The half hour having elapsed, and there still being no sign of wind, he gave them another discourse. He had scarcely finished when a breeze sprung up, and they set sail,—the captain remarking, "It was strange that we could not get any wind till you were done preaching." This may be a different account of his former landing, but from the variation in it as to facts we think it a different event.

* Now the village of St. Stephen's.

† The place where these people lived is now called the Parish of St. James. The people are at present under the pastoral charge of the Rev. John Turnbull of the Free Church. An interesting account of their previous and subsequent history we have given in the appendix, extracted from the Colonial Presbyterian. (See Appendix F.)

I directed them to faith in Christ, and holiness of life, and to morning and evening worship in the family and closet. After being two weeks among them, I left them for eight days, and spent that time with another settlement of the same people, ten or twelve miles distant. As soon as the Sabbath was over, I returned and preached, according to an agreement made before I left them. At the conclusion, I intimated publicly that as they had several times expressed a desire to have the sacrament of the supper dispensed to them, I would do so next Lord's day. I informed them that I would converse with intending communicants, and help to prepare them every day before next Sabbath, except during the time of public worship on Thursday and Saturday. I informed them, also, that none could be admitted without a certificate from Mr. Morrison. This Mr. Morrison was a very pious man, and very attentive to collect them on the Sabbaths, and read to them, and pray for them.

"The week was spent in preparing, as well as we could, for receiving the sacrament. A considerable portion of time was spent in secret prayer and self-examination. On Sabbath the sacrament was dispensed, and received with a great deal of sobbing and tears, and, I hope, with no little faith and love. The people here who came from Scotland knew the Gaelic best, but the young generation born here knew the English better; so I had to preach in both languages, to accommodate both. The old people, born in Lord Reay's country, Sutherlandshire, endeavoured to maintain the piety which they saw at home; but many of the young forgot the Gaelic, and had all their knowledge by the English.

"On Monday I preached in Gaelic and English, and bade them farewell. A number of them came to me after sermon, and told me they could not bid me farewell till they heard me preach another sermon; and their plan was, not to detain me there, but to go along with me to Scoodic, and get me the English church to preach in, and that after sermon we would part affectionately. I could not refuse my agreement to this.

"Next morning we set off. There were between twenty and

and thirty horses, all but mine carrying double. We readily got the church, and all the Highlanders got in; a number of the town's people got in too. I had to explain that the first sermon must be in Gaelic, and the second in English. Some of the English people stayed in all the time of the Gaelic. I preached to the Highlanders on 2 Cor. xiii. 11, and dismissed the congregation; and preached in English on Gal. vi. 14. Two young men, who had been hearing me, requested to go along with me eight or ten miles, and that I should preach to them."

The narrative abruptly terminates here. From his own memoranda we learn that he preached also at St. Andrew's, returning; and that he also preached at Digdeguash. This is a long settlement stretching along the river of that name. The people were originally Highlanders. He preached twice on the same day in different parts of the settlement.

He returned home by way of St. John. We have not heard of his preaching there, but we have heard of efforts, while there, though unsuccessful, for the good of an unfortunate man, named MacL., whom he had known in Pictou. The man had shot another who had become bail for his appearance at court, on the latter going in company with the sheriff, to make him a prisoner. MacL. was taken up and tried, but through some legal defects in the proceedings, was detained for some time in jail, till a general jail delivery which occurred at the time gave him his liberty. During his imprisonment he seemed affected by his situation, and every Sabbath sent a request for the prayers of the church. But on obtaining his freedom, all his concern passed away. On meeting the Doctor in St. Johns, he treated him very kindly, but on the latter endeavouring to awaken him to serious reflection, he found him quite hardened. He talked very earnestly with him for some time, but to no purpose. The man afterwards killed another in a passion, and was executed, we believe summarily.

On his way returning home he preached at Shubenacadie, we believe spending a Sabbath there.

We must now turn to an important event in the history of the church here, in which he was deeply interested, and in which he bore a prominent part, viz., the union of the Presbyteries in the Province into one body. We have seen that he had refused to unite with the other Presbyterian ministers already labouring in the colony. This he did, we have no doubt, partly from the strength of the party feelings which he had brought with him from Scotland, but partly from conscientious objections to the Constitution of the Presbytery, and certain things in the conduct of its members. As we have seen considerable irritation had been produced by the controversy which followed.

But the principal parties concerned had passed away some years before,* and any feelings that had been excited had subsided, and though there was no union, nor, from the strict views then entertained on the subject, any communion, yet the ministers of the two Presbyteries lived on the most friendly terms. It is but justice to add, that neither party attempted to introduce among their people the peculiarities that divided Presbyterians in Scotland. The direction of the Antiburgher Synod to Doctor MacGregor, that he was sent not to make Seceders, but Christians, was faithfully followed by him. It is remarkable how little the fathers of our church did, in the way of teaching their people the differences between the several Presbyterian bodies in the mother country. There is in consequence, now, we might almost say, a discreditable ignorance among them, in reference to questions which have agitated the church there. As to any party feeling that may have remained among the ministers, a longer residence in the country enlarged the sphere of their vision, and showed them the folly of maintaining a separation, on questions of merely local interest, and which had no connection whatever with the state of the church here. The circumstances in which they were placed—the fewness of their number—the felt need of counsel and co-operation—as well as their distance from the scene of controversy and the ex-

* Mr. Smith died in 1795, and Mr. Cock in 1805.

citing causes of division, tended to draw them more closely together.

The members of the Presbyteries had formerly met to consult on measures of common interest, and to some extent had co-operated in promoting the Redeemer's kingdom. But now it was felt that an endeavour should be made to form a union without the sacrifice of principle on either side. One measure that is said to have had an important influence in bringing it about, was the Academy which was at this time projected. The greatness of the undertaking, and yet the pressing call for such an institution, in consequence of the deficient supply of ministers from abroad, impressed upon the minds of any who might have hitherto held back, the necessity of combined effort for its establishment and maintenance. We have no particular account of the negotiations for union. The following extract of a letter from Doctor MacGregor to Doctor Keir, seems to describe the first steps taken toward the object:

"The principal occurrence that has happened among us since I saw you, is the ordination of Mr. John Cassel, and his settlement at Windsor and Newport. He comes from Fife, studied at St. Andrews, and was licensed by our Presbytery here. He had a call from Merigomish, and Shubenacadie meant to call him, but came behind. His salary is £200, and he preaches day about at Windsor and Newport. I do not remember the exact distance between the two places of worship, but I think it is not above six miles. This congregation is an extension of the bounds of our church. We should pray often and earnestly for its prosperity, as it may be a means of extending the kingdom of Christ into the western part of the Province.

"We are here contemplating an union of all the Orthodox Presbyterian clergy in the Province, as the best plan for extending and perpetuating the church here, and especially a gospel ministry. The orthodox clergy, beside our own body, are at present, Graham, Waddell, Dripps, Robson, Munroe, and Forsyth. Waddell, Robson, and Forsyth, met with us at Windsor, at Cassel's ordination, and we had a conversation on the subject. Little was done but to appoint a Committee to draw up articles of agreement, and to desire all the ministers to write to the Committee what help they could. I think that the Committee are Mr. Ross, Mr. Waddell, and Mr. MacCulloch."

We have no documents describing the progress of the nego-

tiations, but it is universally understood that Doctor MacGregor was one of the warmest advocates of the measure. It might be supposed by some, from the manner in which he refused on his first arrival to unite with the same brethren, that he was deficient in liberality of sentiment. But this would be to confound close views of communion with a want of Catholicity of spirit. It is quite possible to be an advocate of the former, and yet have the largest benevolence toward those from whom we may separate. This to a considerable extent he illustrated from the outset. We think, however, that he increased in this spirit as he advanced in years; at all events, by nothing was he more distinguished in his later years, than by his freedom from any thing like narrow-minded sectarian bigotry. Accordingly he entered heart and soul into the measures for accomplishing the union, and the late Doctor Keir informed us, that its success was chiefly owing to the zeal as well as Christian meekness of him, and the Rev. Hugh Graham, of the other Presbytery, a man of kindred spirit.

As the result of negotiations it was agreed to form a union on the basis of their common Presbyterianism, leaving the questions upon which Presbyterians in Scotland differed, as matters of mutual forbearance. Differences of opinion undoubtedly existed on minor points. These were not overlooked, they were freely and fully discussed, but "after much consultation and prayer," it was believed, that these differences were not such as to hinder their union, more especially as in this country they neither had, nor were likely to have any *practical* importance. All the preliminaries were arranged in the year 1815, when the arrival of brethren from Scotland, with their minds still heated by the controversies there, frustrated the measure for a time. This failure discouraged for a moment the friends of union, but the scruples of these brethren were at length removed, and a union embracing all the Presbyterian clergy and congregations in the Province, with one exception, was finally consummated in the year 1817. In regard to this exception, it is said in one of the documents of the time, "the

terms of the constitution of that congregation forbade its union with any other body of Christians whatever. Its pastor, however, expressed and retained good will to the United Church, and continued in habits of Christian intercourse and friendship with many of its ministers and members."

The first meeting of the Synod of the united body took place at Truro, on the 3rd of July, 1817. By the unanimous voice of his brethren he was chosen moderator, and when he stood up to open the proceedings with prayer, his hands trembled as if palsied, and his emotion was so deep, that he was for a time scarcely able to proceed, but quickly recovering himself he poured forth his feelings in a prayer, the fervency of which, after the lapse of more than forty years, still lingers in the memory of those who heard it, To all the brethren, but especially to Doctor MacGregor and those who survived of the early missionaries, this meeting was a deeply interesting and affecting event. They had long been few and divided, and labouring amid many privations. Now they were united and comparatively strong, and they saw the fruits of their labours in flourishing congregations gathered in the wilderness. Before them, too, were the most encouraging prospects. The fields around were white unto harvest, the Academical Institution, for which a charter had been granted the previous year, held out to them the promise of a supply of faithful labourers to reap them. "Then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing, then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them."

The union thus happily formed was productive of the best effects, not only in Nova Scotia, but also in Scotland. The intelligence of its formation was one of the means which led to the adoption of measures for bringing about a union between the Burghers and Antiburghers there, which was successfully accomplished three years later, when these two bodies coalesced under the name of the United Secession Church. At home the Synod immediately addressed itself to the great work of extending the gospel and sound Presbyterian principles. The

principal business at this meeting was the appointment of Doctors MacGregor and MacCulloch, Rev. Duncan Ross, and Mr. John MacLean, Ruling Elder, as a committee to bring in a report on "ways and means for promoting religion," to be given in at a meeting of Synod in October following.

The Synod accordingly met at the time appointed. Doctor MacGregor preached the opening sermon from Neh. ii. 20. "The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build." The report of the Committee, we may remark, however, was the production of Doctor MacCulloch, was adopted, and ordered to be published. It is a most valuable document, and contains a great variety of suggestions for the promotion of religion in the church, securing its permanence and enlarging its bounds. These suggestions were approved, and measures adopted for carrying them out. Among these perhaps the most important was the taking subscriptions on behalf of the Seminary of Education at Pictou. Of this meeting Doctor MacGregor thus writes to Doctor Keir in November of that year:

"The Synod met on the day appointed, and it was a very agreeable and harmonious meeting. Little business was done except the approbation of a long overture, prepared by Doctor MacCulloch, of ways and means to be used for confirming and enlarging the church. Among these means are, discourses by ministers at Presbyteries, subject to the criticism of the brethren; some improvements in ministerial visitation, and examination of the young generation; the sending of ministers two and two, to preach the gospel *gratis*, to places destitute of it, at least for some time, their expenses to be paid out of the Synod fund; the founding of a college in Pictou; and the getting a printing press for the cheaper circulation of religious truth and intelligence, the money for buying it to be raised by voluntary contribution. N. B. If you gather a little for it on the Island, the press will probably be fixed in Pictou, which will be more convenient for you for getting religious intelligence, than if it be in any other place. Penny-a-week societies are recommended for different purposes, one of which is the printing press. These societies are an easy and powerful engine for spreading the gospel. You should set up one or more of them, and they will collect money for some good end. But as the overture is to be published, I need not be more particular, for you will get some copies of it."

We may remark here, that during the remainder of his life, he felt a very lively interest in all the proceedings of Synod, and took a prominent part in its business. He was present at every meeting of Synod, except the one just previous to his death. On that occasion feeling himself unfit to take the active part in its business which he had formerly done, he was not in any hurry going down to Pictou to attend. The meeting proved a very short one, and on going down to meet the brethren he found that they had just adjourned. But previous to this his name will be found on almost every important committee of Synod. From his being, from the formation of Synod, one of the oldest members, and especially from his abundant labours and apostolic character, he was regarded generally with deep veneration. In the transaction of business he was marked by the spirit of love and peace, but especially by an enthusiasm in support of every measure for the promulgation of the gospel, and of the Academy as the means of its perpetuation.

At the time of the union, the Synod consisted of nineteen ministers, besides the Rev. James Thomson, who had not been inducted. Three more ministers arrived that summer, the Rev. John Liddell, who was settled at Amherst, the Rev. Andrew Kerr, who was settled at Economy, and the Rev. John MacKinlay, who, after teaching in the Pictou Academy for some time, succeeded Doctor MacCulloch in the charge of the congregation of Pictou town. Of the latter Doctor MacGregor says in a letter to Doctor Keir:

"Mr. MacKinlay is arrived at last, a great acquisition, I believe, to our church. He seems to be an excellent man, of vigorous mind and hardy body, a good scholar, a fine preacher and a good Christian. Newport is to be disjoined from Windsor, and we Pictonians have destined him for Newport. That part of the church seems to need such a man, and he seems to suit their need. We need also to have a learned man in the neighbourhood of the college, to support the credit of the Presbyterians. But Providence may not confirm our decrees. He is sent to Manchester, the two next Sabbaths, and the next two, to the Gut of Canso, if he can find his way to it, then two to St. Mary's, if no call more urgent shall prevent him. If you think that he could be a benefit to the Island during winter, I suppose you could get him over. I request you to write to me

your mind on this point, that I may represent it to the Presbytery at their next meeting. He is very willing to endure hardships."

The prospects of the united body were for a time most favourable. The Academy had gone into successful operation, and several ministers arrived from Scotland, within the two or three years following. At the time of the union, the Synod was divided into three Presbyteries, Halifax, Truro, and Pictou, and soon after another was formed in Prince Edward Island, and another in New Brunswick. But the fair prospects before the Church were soon blighted by causes to which we must now advert.

We have seen that it was the design of the founders of our church to unite Presbyterians of different names in one body, and that for this purpose a basis was adopted in which all could cordially unite, and that at first the measure was successful. With a single exception, all the ministers of the Church of Scotland in the Province went into the union. The plan was also cordially approved by some of the best ministers of that body in the mother country. About that time Doctor MacGregor was in friendly correspondence with several of its ministers in the Highlands, particularly Doctor MacDonald, of Ferintosh, Mr. MacIntosh, of Tain, Mr. John Kennedy, of Killearnan, and Mr. Stewart, of Dingwall. It is well known, that these men were the pillars of evangelical truth in the North of Scotland. In the course of correspondence, Doctor MacGregor had laid before them in full the basis of union, and the plans of the church. The following extract of a letter from Mr. MacIntosh will show how cordially they were approved by these men.

"The details relative to the state of religion and irreligion in your part of the world are truly affecting. You have much need of daily supplies of spiritual wisdom and understanding, and I doubt not but your God in covenant gives you grace corresponding to your need. Opposition in the path of duty you may expect to meet with, but you will overcome through Him that loveth you. When you and I think that the stripling David killed Goliath in single combat, and that infallibility hath promised that

worm Jacob shall thrash the mountains and beat them small, we ought to be courageous, when most sensible of our own weakness and of the power of our enemies. Indeed it has often been a source of encouragement to myself, that 'God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, &c.' He hath endowed you with gifts and graces, suited to the important station, to which he has called you — but it is only in the strength of the grace that is in Christ Jesus, that you can honourably proceed in the path of duty and prosper.

"It rejoiced my heart to learn that you have some worthy brethren in that country, who unite with you in forwarding the best of causes. Their counsel and co-operation will refresh and invigorate your soul. Oh, may you all be of one heart and one way! You have many adversaries; but that will be expected by all who know the history of the church of God in past ages. I have had some very intemperate letters from men who do not approve of your plans and principles. You may believe that I made no reply to such communications. The writers do not seem to be candid and open to conviction,—and I had not leisure, health, or inclination to engage in controversy. Your statement of facts has fully satisfied my mind, respecting the real cause of all the opposition which you and your serious friends have met with. I am grieved to learn that your plan of *union* has failed.* Accounts of the disputes among you, subsequent to the date of your letter, were truly vexatious to me. I admire the Catholic and Christian spirit displayed in the attempt to unite evangelical ministers and serious Christians, without making any sacrifice of principle. The plan promised to be productive of the happiest effects, and I hope it will be adopted at some future period." †

The correspondence, of which the above is a specimen, continued several years. The most of the letters have perished, but those familiar with them describe the correspondence as having been as interesting in its nature as it was Christian in its spirit. They freely unfolded to each other their plans for advancing the common cause, they described their trials and sympathized with each other under them; but they particularly rejoiced to tell of what God had done, and was still doing, in their respective spheres. It has been mentioned to us, that they resolved to fix upon an hour, when both he and they should engage in prayer, for the success of the gospel. Eight o'clock on Saturday evening was the time agreed upon. The good men forgot to make allowance for the difference of time. But, no matter. Could there have been a more delightful exhibition of the spirit of

* This refers to the failure in 1815, already mentioned.

† Before this letter was written the union had actually taken place.

union, than this one proceeding, or a more impressive evidence of the real union subsisting between the genuine followers of the Lamb, though separated by broad oceans, or what seemed far more difficult to pass, the earth-built walls of sectarian separation.

At that time, as we have mentioned, Pictou was rapidly filling up with Highland immigrants. Those after their arrival were under the ministry of Doctor MacGregor and his associates, who contented themselves with preaching the gospel to them, without pressing upon them any of the peculiarities of the secession. The secession was little known in the Highlands, except by unfavourable report, and those who came from that quarter were not only attached to the Church of Scotland, but many had a blind prejudice, and an ignorant bigotry regarding the ministers of any other body. To accommodate them, it was resolved to make an effort to obtain for them ministers from the Establishment. Besides more distant settlements requiring pastors, one was needed between the sphere of Mr. Ross's labours on the West River, and Doctor MacGregor's on the East. Accordingly, it was resolved that an effort be made to obtain a minister to be settled there, and though the old settlers and their descendants preferred the secession, they were willing to receive one whom Doctor MacGregor might recommend. And as the majority, embracing the back settlements, preferred the Church of Scotland, Doctor MacGregor was appointed to correspond with the ministers already mentioned to secure, if possible, for that and other places, ministers of that body, such as they might recommend.

These ministers entered cordially into these views, and used their best exertions to carry them out. More than once they had their attention directed to individuals preparing for the ministry, whom they thought suitable, but before they were ready to be sent, circumstances occurred either to prevent their coming, or to prevent these ministers from recommending them. And, at length they were reluctantly obliged to acknowledge themselves unable to meet the wishes of their brethren in this

country. This will be seen by an extract from the letter of Mr. MacIntosh, from which we have already quoted:

"But, it is time for me to tell you that Mr. Stewart and I have not succeeded in obtaining a preacher whom we could recommend to you. Far from being indifferent to the great objects of your letters, or insensible ofour own obligations to do every thing in our power for accomplishing that object, we had serious consultations among ourselves, and with several of our brethren,—and wrote to the South of Scotland, enquiring if a person possessed of the qualifications you describe, could be found who would accept of your offer,—but I am sorry to tell you, that none has occurred as yet, that we could send to that part of the Lord's vineyard. Those that we would think best qualified would not leave their situations in this country. Indeed we have few preachers of any description in this part of the country. But I do not wish to expose the nakedness of the land. Mr. Stewart and I have advised with the most intelligent and zealous ministers in the North of Scotland,—but did not hear of any that would suit your purpose, and was willing to go to America. There is a Mr. ——, a student of divinity, who offered himself, and expected to be licensed with the view of going to that country, but we declined to recommend him, until we were better satisfied as to his steadiness and views of church government. He is recommended to us as a serious young man, possessed of respectable talents, and we hope that he is so. But we know that he has been *reeling* some years ago, and we would think him very ill-suited to your part of the country, *unless he be steel to the back.* * * I understand that you have got a Gaelic preacher into some part of that country in course of last summer or harvest. But it is quite unnecessary for me to say anything about him. I hope that your intended Academy may prosper."

To show how this spirit prevailed among his brethren, we shall quote part of a letter from the Rev. John Kennedy of Killearnan:

"It is a pity that the living members of the mystical body should be separated by little external differences, while they are found holding the head. I readily admit the truth and force of what you wrote of many, who were here members of the Church of Scotland, as ignorantly holding by her in name when they go over the water, and so foolishly in the extreme forfeit to themselves the inestimable privilege of having the gospel preached in other connections. I am surprised how any, who really know the truth as it is in Christ, could ever think of living separately from the spiritual members of your connection. Is it not the same Christ that all gospel ministers preach? Is it not the same spirit that applies to all the redemption purchased by Christ, and that carries on in all converted sinners the work of internal sanctification? Is it not the same hope, to

which all quickened sinners are begotten by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? Is it not from the same inexhaustible store, that all those commissioned by Christ to preach the gospel, have their provision, and when it pleased him to place the treasure in earthen vessels, did he not reserve the excellency of the power for himself? I regret that spiritual believers should look upon themselves as of Paul or of Apollos. I trust that things continue flourishing with you. I trust that your College is in a prosperous way, and that it will prove a thriving nursery for the church of Nova Scotia. The church in Nova Scotia finds a daily place in my prayers."

Well had it been for the interests of vital godliness in this Province if the spirit of these men had animated the other ministers of the Church of Scotland. That unhappy schism from which Presbyterianism in this Province has scarcely yet recovered would have been averted. But from these letters it will be seen, that while there was so much that promised well for the extension of the common cause, elements of a very different nature were at work, which were soon to issue in a most painful and unnatural strife. Of this, so far as it affected Doctor MacGregor, we must now give an account, though we should be happy could the whole, with a due regard to historic truth, be buried in oblivion. We shall give a calm narrative of events, stating the facts as impartially as we are able, and with as much tenderness to the feelings of surviving relatives of persons whose conduct may be impugned, as truth will allow; and we shall as much as possible employ the language of others. The following is from Doctor MacCulloch's letters to Doctor Burns:

"At the time that Doctor MacGregor was eagerly pressing forward in his career of benevolence, his congregation and several others around him, were visited with an inundation of Highlanders, under the spiritual guidance of some of those pests of the Highlands, who contrive to earn a subsistence, not by honest industry, but by travelling from house to house, and retailing their trash, as the devout saws of this good minister, and that pious old woman. Finding their ghostly instructions neither prized nor productive in Pictou, they contrived to infuse into their followers a spirit of dissatisfaction with Doctor MacGregor and other clergymen around him. These complained that the ministers of Pictou neither preached the gospel, nor would prosecute the witches, by whom some of them were grievously tormented; and what was a greater stumbling-block still, they

found that in Pictou those who wish the gospel must support its ministers. As the safest and cheapest course, therefore, they withdrew from the public ordinances of religion; at one time, edifying each other in their folly, and at another, receiving the ministrations of any strolling vagabond, who chanced to visit them; till from a belief that a minister from the Church of Scotland would be paid by the king, they obtained from the isle of Mull, your correspondent, the Rev. Donald Fraser, to preach to them the true gospel, and give the witches their due."

It may be stated however, that the witches gave most trouble in Mr. Ross's congregation. When he refused his assistance to put a stop to their doings, two of his church members actually went down to the Gulf, to secure the aid of the Roman Catholic priest, for the purpose. Mr. Ross, at length, preached a sermon on the subject, which gave such offence that a number never went to hear him again.

On the East River the division principally originated with a man named Holmes. He was one of those men who make great pretensions to superior sanctity, but who, from the circumstance of their religion chiefly manifesting itself in making loud and long prayers, are regarded by some as men of the deepest piety, and by others as unquestionable hypocrites. He had arrived, a few years previous to this, in poverty, and had been most kindly treated by Doctor MacGregor and his people. The Doctor permitted him to act as a Catechist on the East River, but would not provide him with pay. His labours in this capacity were not generally valued; and on several occasions his expositions of Scripture, and statements of doctrine, were disputed by men, who were as well informed on such subjects as himself. During his visits round, he soon began to give out that they had not the gospel in Pictou, and to endeavour to produce discontentment among the people with their minister.

Soon after he left for the United States, to see a brother there—Doctor MacGregor even collecting money, to help to pay his expenses. After two years he returned, complaining, that during his absence he had only heard two ministers who preached the gospel, "and they were Seceders." On his return he for a time resumed attendance upon Doctor

MacGregor's ministrations, but very soon began to excite dissatisfaction in the minds of those, whom he could influence. Some of those who joined him had previously expressed themselves highly pleased with Doctor MacGregor's preaching. Their great fear, they said, in coming to Nova Scotia was that they would not hear the gospel, but they were rejoiced to find that it was as purely preached here as in Scotland. But now through Holmes' representations, they were persuaded that the gospel was not preached at all in Pictou. A case of discipline occurring about this time rendered him still more dissatisfied with the church here. The party thus formed began holding meetings of their own on Sabbath after the Gaelic service, though many of them understood English well enough to have attended service in that language. After this they sent to Scotland a man named MacStephen, to get a minister for them, but the vessel in which he sailed never was heard of.*

We shall now quote the words of the late Alexander Grant, originally published in a Provincial newspaper in the year 1840:

"The Doctor preached a sermon about this time, at the suggestion of the Session—upon the 13th verse of the 13th chapter of Hebrews. The sermon was not the occasion of dissension, but dissension was the occasion of the sermon. A number of illiterate men from the Highlands of

* A Mr. MacKay, who afterward settled at New London, Prince Edward Island, and who came out with some of the leaders of the party, but who refused to join in their opposition to Doctor MacGregor, informed the Rev. A. MacGillivray, that he was the last who parted from this man on his departure. He said to him as they parted, "I cannot think that you will prosper, and I cannot wish you to prosper, for your errand is not good. You are going home with a falsehood. You are going to tell that Doctor MacGregor does not preach the gospel. It is not true. I have watched him and know that he preaches it as purely as any minister in Scotland. Besides this, the ministers in the North know Doctor MacGregor's character and will not believe you. I have heard ministers of great name, both in the North and South of Scotland, and I have remarked that some were great in preaching the law and its terrors, and others in preaching Christ's love to sinners. I have watched Doctor MacGregor, and cannot tell what he is greatest at. He is great at every thing he turns to." Thus they parted, and for ever in this life.

Scotland—men who while at home separated themselves from the communion of the church, having become wise in their own eyes, and determined to refuse instruction, began to disturb this congregation by asserting that the Seceders were not Presbyterians at all. Those captious and bigotted individuals faulted the Doctor very much too, for his reproving them and others for their foolish notions respecting witchcraft. The Doctor, having been informed of these matters by the members of Session, resolved, at their suggestion, to preach a discourse, illustrative of the scriptural constitution of the Secession Church. This he did from the text already mentioned. This discourse did not contain a single sentiment calculated to offend any reasonable man. He stated that all who entered the church contrary to the regulations established by Christ, climbed over the wall, and consequently were thieves and robbers—that the Secession ministers and elders came in by the door—that they were chosen by the people and ordained by the Presbytery, in conformity with the practice of the apostles and primitive Christians. It was at this time, that one of these fault finders exclaimed from the outside of the church, 'Christ is the door.' To this the Doctor at the time paid no attention, but proceeded with his wonted calmness in the illustration of his subject. 'Some individuals among you,' says he, 'affirm that we are not Presbyterians—that we have no Presbytery. I can assure you that we have a Presbytery, and such a Presbytery, as cannot be found within the four posts of the Church of Scotland. We have a Presbytery in which there is neither a minister nor elder, that did not come in by the door. They have been chosen to their offices by the voice of the people, and ordained in obedience to the authority of the Head of the Church. In the Church of Scotland there is not a Presbytery in which there are not to be found some members that did not come in by the door. Ministers, instead of being chosen by the congregation, are often presented by the patron, and the congregations are compelled to submit to the patron's choice, let the qualifications of the presentee be what they may.'

"On the Monday after this sermon was announced, there was a congregational meeting, at the West Branch, at which C. M'L. was present; under the influence of a very bad feeling, this man stated that Doctor MacGregor in his sermon yesterday declared that there were, between the four posts of the Church of Scotland, but thieves and robbers. I at once contradicted the man, by telling him that the Doctor never declared such a thing; but that he said there was not a Presbytery of the Church of Scotland which did not contain some members that did not come in by the door, that is by the will of the patron, without the consent of the congregation. I told him at the same time he would have to account for what he said. There were men present whom I called to bear witness. I then gave him up to the Session. After some time he appeared, and admitted that he had spoken in the above mentioned manner. The Doctor being present, denied having used such an expression. He said that though Christ was before him, though heaven was on the one side, and hell on the other, and that though his avoiding the one and gaining the other depended

on the truth of that statement, he would deny his ever having made it—that he had as great respect for ministers of the Church of Scotland as for any ministers. C. M'L. still persisted in saying, that he did use the language. The Doctor then said, that he would refer the case to the Presbytery. After some time the Presbytery met. C. M'L. appeared and enquired of the Presbytery how they were going to try the case. Was it by witnesses, or how was it to be tried? He still continued to affirm (that the Doctor had said) that there were but thieves and robbers in the Church of Scotland. The Rev. Doctor replied, that he took great liberty of speech with the Church of Rome, that such liberty as that he never took—meaning that he did not consider the Church of Rome itself so destitute of true Christians as to contain nothing but thieves and robbers. It was then enquired whether M'L., was a member of the congregation or not. He was asked himself if he was a member of the congregation—if he had received church privileges; but he gave no answer. The members of Session then stated that he had received church privileges, and was actually a member of the congregation of East River. He was again asked by the Presbytery if he was a member of the church, but made no reply. Mr. John Douglass, elder, then stated that he was apprehensive M'L. did not understand the Presbytery. The nature of the case was then explained in the Gaelic language as clearly as possible by Mr. Douglass, who told him that it was a serious thing for a man of his years and standing to be put out of the church. But the only answer he gave was, that if he was in the church they could not put him out, and if he was out of the church they could not put him in. Having in this matter refused to hear the church, sentence of excommunication was passed upon him,—not merely for his misrepresenting the language of the sermon, but for his obstinacy in refusing to hear the church—for his wilful stubbornness in refusing to answer the Presbytery, whose authority he had acknowledged at a former period. There were present at the same meeting many who had heard the discourse at which offence was taken by M'L., but not a man could be found to confirm his language. He was then considered to have misrepresented the sermon, and to have stated what was false."

In the summer of 1816, there arrived a man named Fletcher or Fraser, who gave himself out as a minister of the Church of Scotland. His character may appear from the following extract of a letter of the Rev. Samuel Gilfillan:

"I am truly sorry for the confusions in your congregation. I hope by this time He who stilleth the waves of the sea has also stilled the tumults of the people. You may tell them that Alexander Fraser, Fletcher, who went among them as a preacher of the gospel of truth, is an impudent liar. He never was licensed by the Presbytery of Dumblane. I enquired at Mr. Stirling, the parish minister, and he never knew nor heard of such a person. It may still serve some good purpose to state the fact, and may

tend to undeceive a serious people. These facts have more force on some minds than the clearest reasonings. Mr. MacNab supposes him to be the same that some time ago sailed from Saltcoats, and in order that he might pass for a surgeon to the vessel, stole a diploma from a surgeon in the town, and having erased the gentleman's name, inserted his own. But the trick was discovered before they set sail, and he had to seek another ship to transport him and his impudence across the Atlantic."

The supposition of Mr. McNab is undoubtedly correct, for when afterward charged with having acted as described, he did not deny the fact, but attempted to explain it by saying, that as the law required vessels carrying more than fifty passengers to have a surgeon on board, he had been *requested* to pass himself off as one, and for the purpose had *borrowed* a diploma, in which he had inserted his own name in place of the rightful proprietor. But the erasure was detected, and he had to find a passage in another way. His change of name he explained in this way, "About eighteen months previous to his departure from Scotland, he borrowed nearly £200 from an intimate acquaintance, and when he was about coming away, he felt a delicacy in speaking about it to his friend, from a consciousness of being unable to pay the money, and when he came to Saltcoats, the port from which he sailed, being near the residence of his friend, this delicacy and the fear of discovery led him to assume the name of Fraser."

Such was his own version of the matter. But it was of little consequence to Holmes and his party what he had done. He called himself Church of Scotland, and any enquiries as to his previous character, or his authority to preach the gospel, would have been deemed entirely irrelevant. He was immediately taken by the hand by them and by others who had always been known as enemies of the gospel, particularly William MacKay, on the East River, and a man in town named John C——, who is described by all that I have ever heard speak of him, as the most awful blasphemer they had ever heard, hence known usually as wicked Johnny, or Johnny the swearer. Fletcher first preached at Willam MacKay's, and then in different places around. He is described as having a very engaging manner

with him, so that not merely the faction already described, but the majority of the people on the Upper Settlement, even including some of Doctor MacGregor's warmest friends, joined in giving him a call. Of course his previous character was not known, and it must be said for them, that what they did was done in their simplicity. In their innocence they never imagined the possibility of a man assuming to be a minister, who had not the right to do so, and hastily taken with his pleasing address, they were betrayed into the steps they took, without considering how their conduct would appear toward him, who had endured so many privations in preaching the gospel to them.

We need not say, that it grieved the heart of the Doctor not a little to find himself thus forsaken by those, for whose spiritual welfare he had endured so much. He resolved to preach to them on his conduct to them as their minister, and theirs to him. He accordingly delivered a plain yet most affecting sermon, on 2 Tim. i. 15, "This thou knowest that all they of Asia have turned against me, of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes." The following is an outline of the discourse:

"To hold fast the form of sound words—to keep that good thing committed to us, is much to our credit and comfort, whether we be ministers or private Christians. Unstable persons are ready to make shipwreck of faith. The love of the world, of the honour that cometh from man, the fear of disgrace and trouble, and many other causes contribute to this shipwreck. The seed by the way side, on stony ground, and among thorns, brought no fruit to perfection. So the Christians of Asia forsook Paul, when a trial happened to him. But Paul lived and died a faithful minister of Christ. Such defection from faithful ministers is not uncommon, as might be illustrated from Scripture and Church History.

"1. Moses the man of God was faithful in all his house. From him Israel revolted and appointed a captain. 'As for this man Moses we know not what is become of him.' Ex. xxxii. 8. 'They are turned aside quickly out of the way, &c.'

"2. Samuel was so faithful, that not a sin of his is mentioned. Yet when he was old, they forsook God and him. Because his sons were defective in character, they must have a king like all the nations. 'Hearken unto them, for, &c.' 1 Sam. viii. 7, 8.

"3. David was a man according to God's own heart. Yet the great body of the people forsook him, and clave to Absalom, till he and a great

number of them perished in their rebellion; and immediately after this revolt was quelled, another was begun after Sheba the son of Bichri.

"4. After Solomon's death, when the worship of God was established in beautiful order, ten of the twelve tribes went after Jeroboam, who set up the calves in Bethel and Dan, and made Israel to sin.

"5. Jeremiah was a faithful prophet. He laboured for forty years, to show them their sins and turn them to God, but in vain, for they grew worse and worse. A thousand times he declared God's promises and threatenings, but because he touched their darling sins and their false prophets, they could not bear him. 'Come, let us devise devices against Jeremiah, let us smite him with the tongue, &c.' They put him in the stocks, in prison, in the dungeon, and carried him to Egypt.

"6. Christ was * * faithful and free of sin, yet many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him. John vi. 66, 67. 'Thou art a Samaritan.' 'He hath a devil and is mad, why hear ye him?' 'Now we know that thou hast a devil.' 'He casteth out devils by Beelzebub.' A little before his death, Luke xix. 42, his very disciples forsook him.

"7. Paul was faithful. He fought the good fight; yet, 1. All they that were in Asia turned from him. There were many professors in Asia, but they all turned their backs upon Paul, when a little storm arose. 2. Some remarkable persons, Demas, Phygellus, and Hermogenes. 3. The Galatians (ch. i. 6.) They received him as an angel of God. 'They would have plucked out their own eyes, and given them to him;' but he became their enemy by telling them the truth. Ch. iv. 14–16.

"You have called another minister, while I was yours. You could not lawfully take any minister good or bad, till you were separated from me. He was brought here by the enemies of the gospel, with a view to overturn it, though he turned out a condemner of them. You have but a slender hold of him, but for that you *cast me off—cast me off.*

"1. Was it for drawing you from the gospel when you were cleaving to it? then repent not; but if I preached the same doctrine with Christ and Paul, and you forsake me, then you forsook Christ.

"2. Was it for my bad example, walking in any one point contrary to the gospel? then repent not.

"3. Did I 'covet any man's silver, or gold, or apparel?' 'Whose ox or ass have I taken?'"

He also gave intimation, probably on the same day, that at the next day of preaching at the Upper Settlement, he would have something particular to say to them, and requested as many to be present as could make it convenient. On this occasion, which was at the West Branch, he delivered an address, which he had written down in Gaelic. He stated as his reason for doing so, that some were ready to affix to his words meanings of their own, and then to circulate these as the words

used by him. He would therefore read what he intended to say, so that if anything false or any perversion of his words would be reported, it would more easily be discovered. Of this address we have obtained a translation, and long as it is, we cannot find it in our heart, either to abridge it, or to stow it away in the appendix. We therefore give it entire:

You know that this congregation and I have been long united, (*lit.* married together,) as minister and people. There are some of you that have not been long in its communion; but, there are others that were born to me as spiritual children. All that they know about Christ and his gospel they learned it from the ordinances of Christ, (as administered) here; and there are many of them who, I hope, will be a crown of rejoicing to me in the presence of Christ. This knowledge of God was not obtained without great labour, both to me and to such of you as knew Pictou in times gone by. When my labours here began, little advantage of a worldly nature was there to bind me to the place. There was an abundance of labour and fatigue, and many an inconvenience—much enmity against the gospel, and much obloquy, without the prospect of much reward, except the favour of God, and the testimony of my own conscience, that I was in the way of my duty. The friends of the gospel had not much to give, except love; nevertheless, I dare say that the conscience of every man that was in Pictou at that time will say that the deficiency of the stipend never hindered the ministration of the gospel; that it did not prevent me from travelling a great deal, and enduring much hardship in your midst, in order that your souls might be benefitted. At that time none of you doubted that the gospel was preached to you. There was indisputable evidence concerning the truth that was preached in your midst, (by its effects.) "By their fruits ye shall know them," said Christ. The fruit was to be seen as a clear evidence. Many of you, and many more that are now in glory turned to the living God, under my ministry,—you loved the ordinances, and you often travelled far in order to enjoy them; and your behaviour manifested an example of godliness that adorned the gospel. But, alas! Pictou was better when it was poor than when it is rich. When, through the blessing of God our labours had prospered,—many of us became unthankful and haughty. The love of the gospel began to slacken, and to wither by degrees. About that time, strangers came in amongst us, and on their finding the church in this state, some of them attempted to persuade you that you possessed not the gospel, and that I did not preach it. It is no wonder that there should be such men as these among you. In the days of the apostles, the peace of the church was broken by men who thought they were wise enough to be teachers. But the Scripture says, respecting them, that they were so ignorant that they did not "understand either what they said or what they affirmed." But it is no small wonder that there should be a man

among you who were so long under the gospel, and who made a public profession in the church that you did believe, now when one of these strangers tells you that the gospel has not been preached here, that a man of you would be willing to lay aside his profession, and allege that he does not know the Lord Jesus Christ and his gospel, and that you would believe that stranger in preference to the minister that laboured many a year in order to teach you the truth.

This is not the way that godly men are willing to part with their faith. When Paul preached to the Bereans, they followed the ancient faith until they proved his teaching by the Scriptures. And doubtless, if any of you had been doubtful about the truth of my teaching, instead of giving ear to men, who might be ignorant of the truth themselves, you ought to have compared the doctrines taught with the word of God, and receive them or reject them, according as they agreed or disagreed with that.

If I have not been preaching the gospel to you, it would appear that you are in ignorance and in danger of destruction, and it would be a good thing for any neighbour to make known to you your danger. But brethren, before you believe them in a matter so important, you ought to follow Christ's rule, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Let me assist you a little in looking at the fruit. Before believing any man that will say to you that I never preached the gospel to you, you ought to be well assured that he himself knows what is the gospel. The man that knows the gospel will be settled in his opinion respecting the truth, and stedfast in his profession. He will not call one thing the gospel to-day, and another thing to-morrow. Wherever he may find the truth he will receive it, without saying that the doctrine is gospel, or error, according as he likes, or dislikes the preacher. It is not difficult for you to judge, that this has happened to some of those who are making you dissatisfied with my doctrine. I will name only one of them:—When Holmes came here, he professed that he did not come to America for the sake of the world, but for the sake of the gospel that was dead in Scotland. He found the gospel here for a season. But in the course of time his mind began to be dissatisfied on ascertaining that it was not the gospel. He went away then, and travelled, according to his own account, a great part of the states of America, seeking rest and finding none. Providence sent him back, and he found the gospel here the second time; but in a short time he discovered that he was in error, and that there is no gospel at all here. Now, brethren, are such counsellors as these the men that are most competent to teach you what is the gospel, and where it is preached? I am not the least ashamed of the doctrine that I have been preaching among you, for I know that it is the gospel of Christ, and I believe that some of you have experienced that it is "the power of God unto salvation." I have taught you that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." I have made known unto you that he saves them freely by his grace. I have often preached in your hearing, that the work and the fruit of this grace is to prepare your souls for a holy deportment for the discharge of duty in this life, and the enjoy-

ment of everlasting happiness in the life to come: and that you ought all to follow this gospel until the great day of account. Whoever shall refuse this doctrine, or me for preaching it, the day of the Lord Jesus will be a bitter day to him. You will have but little joy in your counsellors when Christ shall come "to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe."

Again I would say to you, before you believe any man that sets you against the gospel that I preached to you, you ought to observe most sharply if their own behaviour bears witness that they really know the gospel. They that know the gospel will manifest something of its nature and spirit in their conduct; and the scripture saith, that that is love and peace. If such people as these have any reason to complain of the state of the church or of the doctrine of a minister, it is with the spirit of love and peace, and by the use of scriptural means that they will endeavour to remedy these things. Love will not lead a man to lie, defame, undermine, or do any injury to the church or to the work of a minister. There are some of you that know they are doing all those things. And who does not know that they are doing their best against the church, and destroying the effect of the ordinances of Christ among you? When they went among you from house to house, were they not stirring up strife and contention, and making you dissatisfied with the ordinances in which some of you obtained your salvation? Is this the behaviour that is according to the gospel?

This class would wish to be considered as real friends to the gospel; and to shew that they are in earnest, they have made one or two efforts to obtain a minister for themselves. This would be useful for you, and I would be for it were it done from pure motives to promote real godliness. You need the undivided labours of a minister, and it would be a joyful thing to me to see a faithful servant of the Lord labouring among you. Should he come from the Church of Scotland or any other church, I would assist him, and rejoice in his success. If the name of our Lord Jesus Christ would be glorified in the salvation of sinners, I would be indifferent who were the instruments. But what I wish you to consider is this, what means did they employ to obtain the gospel for themselves? It is very clear that they would look on any man,—any godly man as an enemy, who would shew himself to be a friend to the church of Christ in Pictou. And on the other hand, any man that had been an enemy to the church and the ordinances in this place, even should he be wholly unfit for any Christian communion, though he should be altogether unholy, and a public enemy to all godliness, they received into their friendship and communion, and they agreed together to overturn that church and these ordinances, in which some of you have enjoyed the presence and the blessing of Christ. God could not be reconciled to this, and it is no wonder if his providence disconcerted their plans. They sent a man to Scotland for the gospel. But, before he reached, God called him to judgment, and to give an account of the gospel he left in Pictou; and you, brethren, in a very short time, shall follow him to the judgment-seat of Christ, to declare

in the presence of the God of justice and of holiness, what doctrine you believed or did not believe in this place.

I would suppose that a providence so remarkable would lead them to solemn reflections and close searching of the heart, "What, if the blood of that man shall be required at my hands! I fear that my way is not right in the sight of God." But it did not. It does not appear that it ever occurred to them, that God had a controversy with them. As soon as a man under the name of a preacher came, they received him without making any inquiry: whether he came out of his own accord, or whether a church court sent him to them; and whether he did or did not bear a good character where he was,—two things that are especially necessary, in order to a person possessing proper authority to preach the gospel.

"Try the spirits whether they are of God." Men that have a sincere love for the gospel will inquire diligently concerning the character and conduct of a preacher as well as his doctrine, before receiving him. That preacher went away, and I am going to say nothing about him. But it is my duty to call upon you to take notice of the manner of that party that were so eager to retain him, in order that they might have the gospel. It is not seldom that they are in the habit of speaking about the marks of the children of God. This is a mark that the mouth of Christ gave us of his people, by which they and you can be tested,—"A stranger will they not follow, but they will flee from him, for they know not the voice of a stranger." Here is another mark that Jeremiah gave, about the children of disobedience,—"I have loved strangers, and after them I will go." Unless mercy prevent, the class of people to whom I have referred will ultimately come to shame and disgrace. They are on the highway to destruction.

This congregation has need of being sifted and tried, and God may employ these men as means to bring his church into trouble, that she may be proved and purified; but let them think of the end of the case, lest they may have as much bitterness as they ever had of satisfaction in their undutiful behaviour. When the Lord's great day of account will seize them, they will have but little consolation in remembering that they despised the ordinances of God, and that they endeavoured to injure others. When God shall arise to judge this case, my prayer is that he may have mercy on their souls.

Now brethren, I will address briefly those of you who are members of the church, and have followed their advice. First think of the command of God, about giving obedience to the rulers of the church: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves. For they watch for your souls as they that must give account." When you received church privileges, you promised this obedience in the presence of God, angels, and men. You bound yourselves to the church as members of the body; you promised by your profession to walk according to the laws and regulations of the house of Christ, to bear witness on his side in the world. You promised obedience in the Lord to me as your minister, and to the session in this congregation. Does your conscience then in the presence of God,

say that you have been walking according to this profession? Some of you are blameless in this matter. Notwithstanding all the disturbances that have been among you, these have understood that they have the gospel already, and they have preserved themselves from evil counsellors.

To them I will say that their connection with me is as it was. We have been long together in the peace of this gospel, and it will ever be a pleasure to me to aid in promoting the life and salvation of their souls. To the rest I have something else to say. When I undertook the charge of this congregation I promised in the presence of God and the church to feed the flock of Christ, to teach you the gospel, to tell you your sins and your duty without fear, as your state might require. I promised this as I would have to answer to Christ at his glorious coming, and in his kingdom. This was, doubtless, a binding obligation upon me. But, brethren, you put yourselves under obligations equally stringent. When you joined yourselves to the church by a public profession, you promised me obedience in the Lord. I call upon you therefore, in the presence of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the presence of the church, to declare why you have rejected me, and along with me, the ordinances you promised to support? Why did you forsake the obedience promised me, in the work of the Lord? Why did you set up yourselves so soon as leaders for yourselves, breaking your covenant with God in the church. It seems you imagine that your agreement with me is only like a sort of bargain, which you may break whenever you please. But that is not the manner in which godly men will regard their agreement. If you had cause to complain against me, the court of Christ was open to afford you redress: but there is no power on earth, that can undo the agreement between us, but the power that *first* united us.

By calling another to labour among you, you rejected me as your minister; and now I am about to adopt towards you the way that the word of God directs me. I might preach the gospel to you, and compel you to support it. But I know Christ better than that, and it was never yours that I sought, but you. Christ is able to provide for me. He has done it long honourably, and he will do it as long as he has work for me. Though you have cast me off, neither Christ nor the church has done so. I know many a place that will receive me gladly, and that will gladly receive the glorious gospel of the Son of God, that I preached to you and that you are refusing. I am about to do with you as the apostles did when men who considered themselves very zealous for the truth opposed them. When the Jews saw multitudes attending on the preaching of this gospel, they were filled with envy, and spoke against these things which were spoken by Paul. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing that you put it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." The first time the Presbytery meets, I purpose to solicit them to dissolve the connection between you and me, and give me work in another place. It is a painful providence to me to be rejected by you, after labouring so long among you. But though cast

down I am not in despair. I have an abundance of joy. I have seen much of the goodness of God, and he will not forsake me. I have the esteem and love of godly men, far and near. I doubt not, but my Master will say to me, "Well done, good and faithful servant." I have news to tell, such as few ministers have:—I came to this country alone, without a friend or acquaintance but God; and now I can look around me and see the church extending East and West, North and South. Especially, I am surrounded by more than twenty ministers,—all living in Christian fellowship, and all preaching the same gospel,—the gospel of salvation to lost sinners. I see joy in every surrounding place, arising from the success of this gospel, except this poor ignorant quarter, to which the gospel is not the gospel. I have grown gray in the work of Christ, and though he is shewing me hard things, nevertheless I would not exchange with the one that has the greatest riches or hope among you.

It is you that are to be pitied. And truly you have much need of the pity and prayers of God, by men. And for your own sake I would pray, that it may not be long till you change your opinion concerning your behaviour at this time. It seems you do not think it any harm to reject my ministry; but let me tell you this, when I came, it was in the name of the Lord I came; and you received me in his name. My calling and my authority are as they were; and Christ says, "He that despiseth you despiseth me." You do not suppose that you are despising Christ. But did you not acknowledge me as his minister? Have you not experienced his presence in the ordinances? And now it is your wish to have these ordinances driven away from your midst. Do not think that you are honouring Christ, when you are breaking down his house. What glory shall be left to you, when you shall have put away from you the ordinances of his salvation? "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate!"

Some of you complain that you are getting no good of the ordinances that are administered here. This is doubtless true. But who is to blame? Did you come to them with an humble mind, to sit at the feet of Christ as persons that needed instruction? If you tell the truth you will say that you came to despise. You did not come to learn the way of salvation and your duty; but you came as the Pharisees came to Christ, to wrest his words, and to be a source of contention, and disgrace to his gospel. And God has been dealing with you accordingly. For, instead of making his glory known to you, he let you go away defaming: for "he will fill the hungry with good things, but the rich he will send empty away." This was the way in which the haughty Jews despised Christ himself; and they saw no beauty in him; nevertheless he preached the gospel,—the very gospel that I have preached to you; and that has been and shall be, in early age, "the power of God."

I am now going to leave you: and, in the name of the Lord I would warn you of the danger to which you are exposed. You have obtained but little comfort since the day in which you began to quarrel with the ordinances of God. And the farther you proceed in that course the more certainly will you find to your cost, that there is neither peace nor joy to

be found therein. You have troubled the church, and you have provoked God. You have driven away from your children the gospel, that would make them wise unto salvation. You have taught them to despise. Beware, lest they return into your bosom a bitter retribution. You are bringing darkness on them; and where will be your delight, when they "stumble on the dark mountains?"

Do not think that I am leaving you in anger. It is my duty. It was your eternal welfare that I always sought. And, though you have dealt undutifully with me, that is what I shall still seek. When Christ was "reviled, he reviled not again." When they crucified him, he said, "Father, forgive them."—This is my prayer for you.

In a short time we shall both end our journey in this world. Perhaps we shall never again meet on earth in the way of public worship. But there is one day before us in which we must look one another in the face. We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. I will stand there as your minister. I will bring with me and present in the presence of Christ the gospel that I preached in your midst. And you must answer him how you treated this gospel and me. "The day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night." Therefore, "be ye also ready,"—ready to declare in the presence of the living God how you have derided, some especially his doctrine and his church, and offended the minds and broken the peace of weak believers, and taken the off-scouring of the world for friends and companions, in order that you and they might destroy those ordinances that you at one time acknowledged to be the ordinances of Christ, and the means of your salvation. Prepare to meet with me on the great day, at the judgment-seat of the glorious God. There it shall be fully declared what the gospel is, and who preached it, and who believed it, when the Lord Jesus Christ shall be "revealed from heaven in flaming fire," taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe.

To you who have manifested friendship to the gospel I would say, it is my opinion, that the church will by no means cast you off; or any other one that may see his error. It is my duty to exemplify corresponding love in return; and I doubt not but the courts of the house of God will look to you, to preserve you in the enjoyment of every privilege that Providence may deem expedient. The Presbytery is to meet at the West River next Wednesday week. I purpose to give up this half of the congregation then, and your circumstances will be looked to if you desire it. But between this and that time it will become you to bring your own case and that of your families before the Lord, and to ask that aid and direction, that he has promised to his people. And may the Lord "lead you to the love of God, and the patience of Jesus Christ,"—may he "bless you and keep you."*

* For the translation of this address we must express our obligations to Mr. Robert Grant, preacher.

The above address loses much of its power by translation. Those who can read it in the original have assured me that it was scarcely possible for a Highlander to hear it unmoved. It was delivered, as we may suppose, under deep emotion. The tears coursed down his cheeks, and his tremulous voice indicated the depth of feeling, which only by a struggle he was enabled so far to overcome as to be able to proceed. The whole congregation were deeply affected. Many cried like children, and the whole place was a Bochim, or place of weeping. They were overcome, not merely by the sight of their aged pastor thus treated, but by a sense of their own ingratitude in the manner in which they had acted toward him.

Nor did their feelings evaporate in tears. They proceeded to action. A meeting was immediately held, and a paper drawn up, expressive of their deep sorrow for the manner in which they had treated him. This was subscribed by the large majority of the followers of Fletcher, who had been for a length of time resident on the East River. Holmes and his party, with those who had but recently arrived, and were filled with prejudice against the Secession ministers, still held aloof. Commissioners were appointed to present this acknowledgment to the Presbytery, and to urge the continuance of the Doctor's services among them. Their efforts were successful, and he continued to labour among them as usual, until some years later, when by an amicable arrangement, the people in that quarter were set apart as a separate congregation.

In the meantime Fletcher had left, making an excuse for not remaining here that there were so many places in Canada, entirely destitute of the gospel. When in Halifax on his way, it is said that he was in such a state of intoxication, at the boarding house in which he stayed, that means had to be adopted to keep liquor from him, and he otherwise acted badly. On his arrival in Canada he so far imposed on a Presbytery there, that they licensed him, but his character having followed him from Scotland, and indeed becoming exposed there, he was

deprived of his license, and his later years were spent in wretchedness.

In the following year (1817), the Rev. Donald A. Fraser arrived at the solicitation of the malcontents on the East River. We wish to say as little to his discredit as possible, but it is undeniable that he was under a cloud previous to his leaving the old country. He was immediately engaged for a year, and they now congratulated themselves that they at last had the gospel, but they soon became dissatisfied with him. Mr. F. afterward gave evidence of decided talent, but at this time he was regarded by all parties as a very poor preacher; and though in later times his conduct was more consistent with the ministerial character, yet at this time it gave offence to serious people. It was therefore determined to get quit of him. The following incident may show the ignorance and bigotry of some of the party. One of them having expressed this view to a member of Doctor MacGregor's congregation, it was said in reply, "Perhaps that will not be so easy for you to do, you have come under an engagement with him, and you cannot get out of it." "Oh," said the other, "we have what will put him away—what if sent home would put him from preaching altogether." "What is that?" "Just that he went into the same pulpit with a Seceder."

Mr. H's. next idea was to send to Rossshire for a minister. A man named Fraser was accordingly despatched for that purpose. He went to the leading ministers belonging to the Church of Scotland in the North, whom we have already mentioned, as in friendly correspondence with Dr. MacGregor, but they all refused to receive his report, that they had not the gospel in Pictou. They told him that Doctor MacGregor and his associates preached the gospel better than any man that they could get to send out here. On one occasion, when Fraser was making some statements to Mr. MacIntosh, of Tain, against Doctor MacGregor, Mr. M. quietly went and brought out a letter, saying that he had some writings of a good man, that he wished to read to him. After reading portions of the letter,

he asked Fraser what he thought of the writer. He replied, "He must be a good man." "Well," said Mr. M., "that is Doctor MacGregor's writing." Mr. H. and his party being disappointed in this quarter were obliged to content themselves with Mr. F.

In the meantime similar proceedings had taken place in the settlements around. Parties were formed, but almost entirely among the later emigrants, in favour of the Church of Scotland. Many joined who were not actuated by the same factious disposition as their leaders, but from the confessedly inadequate supply of Gaelic preaching that the ministers of our church could afford them, and especially from their natural feelings of preference for the Church of Scotland, and the prejudice in the Highlands against ministers of the Secession.

Still, however, Mr. Fraser continued on friendly terms with Doctor MacGregor. He visited freely at his house,—he attended an examination of the Pictou Academy, and professed himself highly gratified with the progress that the students had made, and frequently spoke in the highest terms of Doctor MacCulloch's efforts. There was even a talk of his uniting with the Presbytery here, but there was a difficulty in reference to his certificate, although the circumstances in which he had left the old country were not generally known here. But the party who adhered to him would not bear any friendliness of this kind. The first Sacrament he held, which was at MacLennan's Mountain, he wished to have the Doctor to assist him, but they would not listen to the proposal.

This continued till the arrival of another minister of the Church of Scotland, when he entirely broke off all association with the Doctor. Others followed and the breach was complete. Of more than one of those who came after Mr. F.. justice requires us to say, that while they might have been fitted for a place in some of those Presbyteries in Scotland, in which Moderatism prevailed, and in which the most liberal devotion to the service of Bacchus formed no disqualification for the ministry, yet their conduct was such, that, in the minds of those

who held the strict views of the ministerial character prevalent in the Secession, union with them was impossible. The party, who were opposed to Doctor MacGregor, now rejoiced that they had the pure gospel, and entertained the most extravagant expectations, of what was to be the result of the establishment of the Church of Scotland in their midst. "The Seceder ministers would soon not be allowed to preach at all, but would be glad to get into such situations as schoolmasters, &c." They were even promised that they would get all their taxes back; and we have been credibly informed, some of them were silly enough to refuse to pay till they were obliged to do so with expenses.

To Doctor MacGregor this breach was perhaps the most painful event of his life. He has often shed tears over it. On one occasion entering Robert Marshall's, he was told some of what the others were saying about him. He burst into tears, but in a little, he quoted a passage of Scripture, saying, "That's my comfort," and dried his tears.

But in no part of his life did he manifest more strikingly his Christian meekness. Never did he speak bitterly of the party opposed to him. He continued to visit them in a friendly manner, and to show them every kindness; but they could not bear him. One man, who, before the efforts of Holmes, had said, that if he were hungry, or thirsty, or weary, when he heard Doctor MacGregor, he was so no more, joined the party. The Doctor visited him afterward. He was at work in his potato field. When the Doctor came, he scarcely raised his head and never stopped in his work. The Doctor spoke to him, but could scarcely get civility from him. The Doctor then went to his house and prayed with his family.

He laboured hard to have a reconciliation with Holmes, but the latter was inexorable. Nothing could exceed his bitterness against the Doctor. On one occasion the latter and Mr. Fraser came to the church to preach on the same day. On the Doctor rising, Holmes was heard tramping down the stairs, as if he were escaping from a burning theatre, and on other oc-

casions acted in a similar manner; yet the Doctor could speak no ill of him. He wrote a poem addressed to him, in which he speaks of him in the most friendly manner; and when Holmes died, all the remark he made was, "Well, well, Holmes and I could not agree here, but if *I* get to heaven, we will have no quarrels there."

During these years he was also engaged in missionary labours, but an account of them we must reserve for our next chapter.

CHAPTER XX.

LATER MISSIONARY JOURNEYS—PUBLICATION OF GAELIC POEMS.—1816–1821.

"So that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ." Rom. xv. 19.

We have mentioned at the close of the last chapter, that during the years in which his congregation was so much agitated at home, he undertook several excursions abroad. We shall now proceed to give an account of these, as well as of some other of his later missionary journeys.

During each of the years 1816, 1817, and 1819, he made a tour of a considerable part of Prince Edward Island. Since the beginning of the century, there had been an influx of immigrants from the Highlands of Scotland, who had formed a number of new settlements chiefly in the south-eastern part of the Island, which now form flourishing congregations. It was to these that his efforts on these journeys were chiefly directed.

On the occasion of his journey in 1817, he proceeded along with Doctor Keir to Miramichi for the induction of the Rev. James Thompson. Intimation of the appointment was conveyed to Doctor Keir in the following terms:

East River of Pictou, *July 16th*, 1817.

Dear Sir:—I am appointed by the Presbytery to take the first good opportunity of going to Princetown, and there to inform Rev. Mr. Keir, that he and one of his elders are also appointed to repair to Miramichi as soon

as possible, and there to judge of a call given to Mr. Thomson, and, if it be sustained, to proceed with all convenient speed to the instalment of the said Mr. Thomson, as minister of Miramichi. You will, therefore, immediately proceed to provide a boat, and an elder, with yourself, that when I come there may be as little delay as possible. Expecting to see you soon,

I remain, Yours, &c.,

JAMES MACGREGOR.

Pray.

We question if the whole rolls of epistolary correspondence will afford an example of the condensation of as much important advice in as small compass as in the above Postscript. In going to Miramichi, they experienced a remarkable instance of the care of divine Providence. They took passage from Bedeque in a new vessel going to the former place to take in cargo. She had not sufficient ballast, but they had a pleasant voyage, and dreamed not of danger. But scarcely had they landed from her till she capsized in the river, filled and sank to the bottom, not however in deep water, but she was only raised with great difficulty.

They returned in an open boat, to Princetown, a distance of about one hundred and twenty miles. In the passage over he lay down on the stones of the ballast, and slept soundly, though he awoke to find his elbow on which he was leaning having the skin rubbed off. From Princetown he proceeded to New London where he preached on Saturday. Returning thence he preached on Sabbath at Princetown for Doctor Keir. On their way home from the church he remarked in a very thoughtful manner to Doctor Keir, "Here we are so earnest in preaching to these people, and yet some of them will be damned."

He left the following week for the settlements already referred to in the eastern part of the Island, from which he got a passage to Pictou. On his return home he thus writes to Doctor Keir, under date Nov. 3d:

"I must begin by begging pardon for neglecting so long to write. My work was far behind when I came home, and besides I had to take a journey to visit a small settlement of Highlanders, who had not heard a sermon these fifteen years.

"The Sabbath after I parted with you, I preached at the West River,* to a considerable congregation of English, and a larger congregation, much larger than I expected, of Gaelic hearers. Were they true blue, they would be sufficient with Tryon, to maintain a minister, but I fear that the Highlanders will not do much. We have, however, no Gaelic minister to send to them, or to Belfast. Mr. Paxton writes us that we can get no Gaelic preacher. Belfast was in much the same state as last year, desirous of getting a minister, but not overwhelmed with liberality. Let us pray to God to provide for them."

The settlement of Belfast, which he visited on both these occasions, was founded in the year 1803, by a number of families from the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, who were sent out by the Earl of Selkirk. So judicious were the arrangements made, that they escaped in a great measure the hardships endured by the early settlers in other places. It may not be going too far out of our way to give the Earl's own account of the formation of the settlement:

"These persons, amounting to about eight hundred persons of all ages, reached the island in three ships on the 7th, 9th, and 27th August, 1803. It had been my intention to come to the Island some time before any of the settlers, in order that every requisite preparation might be made. In this, however, a number of untoward circumstances occurred to disappoint me; and on arriving at the capital of the Island, I learned that the ship of most importance had just arrived, and the passengers were landing at a place previously appointed for the purpose. I lost no time in proceeding to the spot, where I found that the people had already lodged themselves in temporary wigwams, composed of poles and branches.

"The settlers had spread themselves along the shore for the distance of half a mile, upon the site of an old French village, which had been destroyed and abandoned after the capture of the Island by the British forces in 1758. The land which had formerly been overgrown with wood, was overgrown again with thickets of young trees, interspersed with grassy glades. I arrived at the place late in the evening, and it had then a very striking appearance. Each family had kindled a large fire near the wigwams and around these were assembled groups of figures, whose peculiar national dress added to the singularity of the surrounding scene; confused heaps of baggage were every where piled together beside their wild habitations, and, by the number of fires, the whole woods were illuminated. At the end of the line of encampment, I pitched my own tent, and was surrounded in the morning by a numerous assemblage of people, whose

* One of the rivers emptying into Charlotte Town Harbour, sometimes called, on maps, York River.

behaviour indicated that they looked to nothing less than the restoration of the happy days of clanship. * * These hardy people thought little of the inconvenience they felt from the slightness of the shelter they had put up for themselves."

After stating numerous difficulties attending the location of the emigrants, his Lordship proceeds :

"I could not but regret the time which had been lost, but I had satisfaction in reflecting, that the settlers had begun the culture of their farms with their little capital unimpaired. I quitted the Island in September 1803, and after an extensive tour on the continent of America, returned at the end of the same month in the following year. It was with the utmost satisfaction I then found that my plans had been followed up with attention and judgment. I found the settlers engaged in securing the harvest which their industry had produced. There were three or four families, who had not gathered a crop adequate to their own supply, but many others had a considerable superabundance."

At the time of their settlement there were three families of Roman Catholics there, who left this part of the Island almost immediately after. At this time all the settlers, with the exception of three or four families of Baptists, were Presbyterians adhering to the Church of Scotland. At first both parties met in one house together on the Lord's day for reading and prayer. After the arrival of one or two itinerant self-taught, self-assumed preachers this harmony ceased, and they have since met in different places.

By the time Doctor MacGregor arrived the people had made considerable progress, but it is said that there was not a horse in the district, and none till within a few miles of Charlotte Town. There was neither road nor bridge, so that persons had to travel along the shore round the creeks or through the wood, by narrow paths. A church had previously been erected at Point Prim, at the instance of a Doctor Macaulay, who had been chaplain in the army for some time, and who preached there statedly, but who seems to have attended as much to the medical profession, as to ministerial duties.

The Rev. Alexander MacKay, lately minister at Belfast, informs me, that he preached one Gaelic sermon on each of his

visits, the first time in the church at Point Prim, the second in a house at Little Belfast—that his first sermon was on the Church of Laodicea, and the second on "the Prodigal Son." He adds, "His sermons on these occasions are said to have made a very favourable impression, and are represented as very plain, faithful, and powerful. On these occasions he also baptized five or six children."

Another person remembers a sermon preached there on one of his visits, from Phil. iii. 13, 14, many remarks in which he is still able to rehearse. We may add that the people there afterward received the Rev. John Maclennan, a minister of the Church of Scotland, and have since been supplied by ministers from that body.

In the year 1819, he proceeded to Prince Edward Island for the ordination of the Rev. Andrew Nicoll, a preacher from the Associate Synod in Scotland, who had been called to the pastoral charge of the congregation of Richmond Bay, which had hitherto been a portion of Doctor Keir's congregation. On this occasion he also traversed the southern shore, as we have positive information of his preaching at Woodville, then called Wood Island. This was not his first visit to that quarter, and he visited them three times, preaching once, twice, or oftener as opportunity offered, his stay being generally short. This being the nearest point of the Island to Pictou, the people there generally conveyed him home in their boats.

The people here were originally from the Island of Colonsa, from which they had emigrated to this place about the year 1800. They were then in very humble circumstances, and their religious condition was more destitute still. There was no Presbyterian minister settled in any part of the southern coast, and they had only heard two or three sermons from the time of their arrival until he visited them.

On his visit in 1819 he preached twice, once in the house of Mr. Malcolm MacMillan, and once in the open air. The text in the house was, Hos. xiii. 9, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help." About this sermon one man

says, that it was the first he ever *heard;* not that he never heard preaching before, but as he remarks, "I listened to it throughout, and though I cannot say that it made any decided impression upon me, I can say that I was never after so indifferent hearing the word of God as before."

On one visit he preached from Isa. lvii. 3, 4, and spoke very freely against sorcery. One effect of the sermon was that a man who professed to be skilled in magic, renounced the practice ever after. The following incident may also be inserted. On one of his visits he gave out that he would preach, but so busy were the people with their fishing, that some supposed that it was useless to try to collect them for preaching. He said, however, that he would preach to the few that would come. He accordingly preached, but as was expected to a very small congregation; but it so happened that those who preferred the fishes to the bread of life, had nothing for their trouble. No fish were taken, which the people generally regarded as a judgment upon them. The Rev. D. MacNeill, of Woodville, to whom I am indebted for the information as to his visits there, adds, "His memory is still held in grateful remembrance by not a few here."

He had also previously visited St. Mary's, but the exact dates of his visits we have not ascertained. The first settlers there came from Truro and built the first house at Glenelg in the year 1801. They were attracted thither by the large amount of Intervale on the banks of the river, and the superior timber abounding around.* There were then two fishermen's huts at the lower part of the river, one at Sherbrooke, and the other four miles farther down. The Rev. John Waddell, who had been their minister in Truro, was the first to preach the gospel to them in their new home, but Doctor MacGregor visited them

* One individual who was assisting them mentioned to me a curious circumstance. On cutting down a very large oak tree, they found after cutting in some distance, a notch with very distinct marks of an axe. On counting the rings which had grown over it they found them to number one hundred and sixty-five, so that the place must have been visited by Europeans in 1636.

several times, particularly after settlers began to move thither from the East River, and other parts of Pictou. He preached in private houses at Glenelg and Sherbrooke. On his first visit the population was extremely scanty, a good sized room being capable of holding all the population capable of attending preaching. He also preached on the eastern branch of the river, and at Lochaber which had been settled by Highland immigrants. There was then no road along the river. He travelled along its banks on horseback, and from their steepness in many places it was frequently necessary to cross the river, to where the ground on its edge was lower. On one occasion on reaching the head of the river, he remarked that he had crossed the river sixteen times.

On one of his trips, either going or returning through the woods between the East River and St. Mary's, in company with the late Alexander Grant, he nearly gave out entirely. It was late in the fall, and though they were on horseback, yet the travelling was so bad, that he became so exhausted, that it was with difficulty he reached the place to which they were going. Though he still enjoyed good health, yet his constitution was in a great measure broken, not only by increasing years, but by the hardships he had undergone, and he was not able to stand the fatigues which he bore so easily in the days of his strength. Indeed as early as the year 1816, his letters speak of his finding his constitution giving way.

On one of his visits going by the East River of St. Mary's, he and his companions stopped in a small hut which had been erected for the accommodation of travellers by the late Surveyor General, on a lot of land owned by him, at what is now called the Garden of Eden. Some of those who were with him, speaking of the roughness of the country at that time, said that it was not likely that they would ever see a road there. "Oh," he replied, "you may see a church on this very spot yet." Curiously enough the present church at the Garden of Eden is built on the very site of that hut.

In the year 1818 he made his second missionary journey through Cape Breton.

He crossed from Antigonish Harbour to Port Hood in a boat. On the way over he was as usual engaged in religious conversation. Having spoken of our natural character, a woman who was present in the boat could not be persuaded that she had a bad heart. He laboured hard to convince her of the fact, with what success we have not ascertained.

The first settlement on the north coast of Cape Breton, was made by a Jersey company at Cheticamp, their settlers being chiefly French Catholics. The next was a Captain Smith, in 1787, who came from Truro but who was originally from Cape Cod. At the time of the Doctor's visit, there were five or six Protestant families at Port Hood, ten or twelve at Mabou, and about as many at Margaree. With these exceptions, the whole coast from Cheticamp to the Strait of Canso, was settled by Scotch Catholics from Lochaber, Strathglass, and some of the Western Islands of Scotland.

The country was then in a very low state. There was not a road any where, and most of the travelling was in boats along shore. The moral and social condition of the people was not any better. As one described it to me, "there was neither law nor gospel, but might made right."

On landing at Port Hood he proceeded to the south-west branch of the Mabou river, through the woods. Here he met Captain Worth mentioned in a previous part of the narrative as having been the means of giving him a passage from Charlotte Town. He lodged in his house and there preached his first sermon. While there he baptized his family, and it may be mentioned, that his descendants now form a large portion of the Presbyterian congregation of Mabou. From the south-west branch of Mabou, he went in a boat to the south-east branch of the same river. Here he spent ten days visiting and preaching, and then returned to Port Hood. He visited and held religious exercises in every house in Mabou during his stay there, and likely the same in Port Hood. This was the first preaching that had ever been enjoyed there, and the young people, even those arrived at the age of manhood, had never heard a sermon. It made a deep impression upon many. One

sermon is particularly spoken of. It was on the words of the apostle, 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16. "For we are unto God a sweet savour in Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one we are the savour of death unto death, and to the other the savour of life unto life."

The Catholics who were settled along the shore were of the same class, and many of them the same individuals who had landed at Pictou, and were so kindly treated by the Doctor and his congregation. He found among them a grateful recollection of his kindness. On his way returning, one man, named Hugh MacLean, took him from Judique to the Strait, a distance of twelve miles, on his horse, and walked himself to take back the animal.

From the Strait of Canso, he proceeded to visit two settlements of Protestant Highlanders, one at River Inhabitants, about twelve miles from the Strait, and the other at West Bay, about eight miles farther on. There was then no road between either of these places, the blaze being the traveller's only guide. A man named MacMillan, took him on horseback to River Inhabitants. He used to relate the following incident as having taken place here: Some time after dark he and his guide arrived at the edge of a stream which they saw no means of crossing. By the light of the moon they observed a house on the other side. On calling loudly a man came out, of whom they enquired if there was any way of crossing. The man answered "No," but added the enquiry, "Who are you?" The Doctor's companion replied, "This is Doctor MacGregor, a minister from Pictou." The man immediately entered the house, and forthwith two stout young fellows came out, who ran down to the stream, waded across, and one taking the Doctor on his shoulders, and the other his companion, carried them across. The family were Highland Catholics, and entertained them as well as they could that night, and in the morning the man volunteered to go with him to the Presbyterian settlement to which he was going. The Doctor offered to pay him for his kindness, but he refused, and asked him if he did not remem-

ber giving such a poor man an axe and a hoe. He added that he was happy to have it in his power to make some return for his kindness.

With one or two exceptions the settlers both at River Inhabitants and West Bay were Highlanders. There were over twenty families at the latter place, the number at the former we have not ascertained, but it is said to have been considerable. Most of them had come thither by way of Pictou, having resided there for longer or shorter periods, during which they had been under the ministry of Doctor MacGregor, and some of them looked to him as the instrument of their first saving convictions of divine truth. They were generally poor and still contending with the difficulties of a new settlement. Several of the heads of families were decidedly pious. Being few in number and all of one religious persuasion, they lived in peace and harmony.

From the time of their settlement here they had not heard a sermon till he visited them, and from the whole circumstances we may judge that his coming was the occasion of much joy. He could, however, remain but a short time with them. He spent one Sabbath at River Inhabitants, and preached in a barn belonging to Mr. Adam MacPherson, both in English and Gaelic. In English he lectured on Rom. v. 1–11; dwelling particularly on verse 8. Some of the people at West Bay came through to hear him. On the Tuesday following he went to West Bay, and preached again, both in Gaelic and English, in a barn belonging to one MacIntosh. His subject here in the former language was Luke xix. 9, "This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham," with a comment on the whole passage, from the first to the tenth verse. On this occasion he told them that one of his objects in visiting them was to urge upon them to continue steadfast in their Protestant profession, as he knew that they were surrounded by Papists on all hands.

At that time there were not any Protestant settlers on the south side of the Brasd'or Lake, from West Bay to Sydney, a

distance of eighty miles, the whole shore being occupied by Romanists; while the north side of the Lake, where are now the settlements of Malagawatch, River Dennis, and Whycogomah, is described as a *terra incognita*. Unless there were a Church of England minister at Sydney, there was not a Protestant minister on the Island.

Immediately after preaching he left West Bay on his return home, being anxious to get a passage from the Strait in a vessel, which he expected to pass through on her way to Pictou. On his departure, John MacLeod, one of his old acquaintances, offered to accompany him to the Strait, but the Doctor would not allow him. After MacLeod had accompanied him a mile or two the Doctor proceeded alone, and on foot; his only guides being the *blaze* and a pocket-compass.

The whole time spent on this mission we know not, but he speaks in one of his letters of "six Sabbaths, and some week-day sermons, being all the Calvinistic gospel that ever Cape Breton enjoyed," by which we presume he describes his own two visits. In another place he speaks of having on this visit met persons over twenty years of age that had never heard a sermon. This must have been at Mabou, which had been settled for a longer period than the other places visited.

In the year 1821 he paid his last visit to Prince Edward Island. Circumstances had rendered Mr. Pidgeon's resignation of the charge of the congregation of St. Peter's advisable, and the Rev. Robert Douglas had been called to be his successor. The Rev. Mr. Nicoll had died after about a year's service, and Mr. William MacGregor, a preacher from the General Associate Synod, had accepted a call to be his successor. Doctor MacGregor went over to take part at the induction of the former, and the ordination of the latter. On the latter occasion, on the 11th October, 1821, the Presbytery of Prince Edward Island was constituted according to a deed of Synod. This was to him a matter of great joy. When we consider the "long desolations" of the Island, and his many toilsome journeys in planting and watering the good seed of the gospel truth among its

inhabitants, we need not wonder that he should be filled with gratitude to God, at seeing the church thus completely established there, and that he should feel as if his work in that part of the church was done.

This may be considered as the conclusion of his missionary journeys, which, for about thirty-three years, had engaged so much of his time. Of the extent of his labours in this respect, we may judge from a statement in his letter to the Glasgow Colonial Society, written about the year 1827, that he had "visited all the Highland Settlements of any consequence (and some of them often) in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Cape Breton, excepting some which have been made within these few years, since old age has impaired my vigour." Though, however, he took no journeys after this date to places at a distance, yet, besides regularly and fully discharging the duties of his congregation, he visited places around. He still enjoyed good health, and his activity seemed scarcely diminished, but it was now directed more to the promotion of the general interests of the church, than to toilsome journeys for which he had not now the bodily vigour necessary.

Previous to this, however, he had sent to the press his Gaelic poems, by which he has had and continues still to have no small usefulness. With an intense desire for the good of his countrymen, he had always taken a deep interest in every measure having that object in view, and especially in what concerned their spiritual welfare. He had spent his life in toiling for the salvation, especially, of those of them who had become expatriated to the Colonies, but he desired also to do something himself for those whom he had left in his native land. With this view he had several years before conceived the idea of rendering the doctrines of the gospel into Gaelic verse, adapted to the music most common among them, as has been expressed, "that he might unite the best lessons with the sweetest melodies of his native land." These poems he had partly composed years before, as he says, "in part, when trav-

elling the dreary forests of America." An individual informs me that going through the woods on a very dark night, he heard a kind of singing, and in a little came upon the Doctor who was riding on horseback, and humming over portions of his poems as he composed them. As he had obtained a little more leisure to study, he had carefully revised them. From the MSS. in our possession it appears that some of them were copied several times. As early as the year 1814 we find him submitting some of them to competent Gaelic scholars. His design as well as the execution of it, having met their approval, he accordingly put the work to press under the title, "Dain â chomhnadh crabhuidh,"* about the year 1818.

The copyright of this little work was given to the Glasgow Tract Society, so long as they should be diligent in circulating it. The following list of the titles of the several poems will give the English reader an idea of the volume:

1. The sum of the law.
2. The ten commandments.
3. Praise of the law.
4. The covenant of works.
5. The covenant of grace.
6. Sin—in two parts.
7. On the evil heart.
8. The gospel.

"Glad tidings of great joy which shall be to all people."

"He will save his people from their sins."

9. Faith.

"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

10. Unbelief.

"He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

"Because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not."

11. The complaint.

"Who shall deliver me from this body of death?"

12. Christ's righteousness.

"That I may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God by faith.

13. The work of the Spirit.

* "Poems to promote Religion."

"He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost."

"Your heavenly Father shall give his Spirit to them that ask him."

14. Grace commended.

"My grace shall be sufficient for thee."

15. The graces commended.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

16. Gospel questions, or, Christ all in all; from the English of Ralph Erskine.

17. The love of God—in three parts.

"God is love."

18. Death.

"I know that thou wilt bring me to death."

19. The resurrection.

"The hour cometh, and now is, when they that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man, and they that hear shall live."

20. The judgment.

"We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, to give an account of the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be evil."

21. Heaven.

22. Hell.

23. Spread of the Bible and the gospel.

We applied to a competent Gaelic scholar, the Rev. John MacKinnon, for a critical estimate of these poems, who has sent us the following, which, though written in the style of panegyric, indicative of the warmth of his Highland feelings, expresses, we believe, the views held of them generally by unprejudiced Highlanders:

"These poems are not a conglomerate or an omni-gatherum, consisting of isolated and fragmentary thoughts, composed on special occasions and on special subjects. On the contrary they are a concise, but comprehensive system of divinity, connected and arranged in systematic order. They appear to be the developments of one conception, carried out according to an original design. They advance no claims to distinguished literary pretensions, or the higher flights of poetic genius, though they are by no means destitute of both. They are the products of a mind richly stored with gospel truths, and possessing the singular facility of expressing these in simple, sweet, and harmonious melody. In these poems the fundamental doctrines of Christianity are defined, illustrated, and earnestly inculcated in a manner perfectly intelligible to the ignorant and most ordinary intellects. The style is simple, terse, and vigorous. It is almost entirely

free from foreign words and idioms. In the versification the rhythm is gently flowing and melodious. So that in whatever metre the poem is composed, the verse is agreeable and harmonious, while, at the same time, each word selected is the very best to express the particular idea intended. The subject of each poem is a fundamental doctrine: such as faith, the covenant of works, the covenant of grace, &c.

It required no ordinary amount of natural talent, and a minute and comprehensive knowledge of the whole Gaelic language, to produce these poems. They visibly bear the stamp of originality. There is not the least appearance of slavish imitation about them. They are the spontaneous gushings of a heart, overflowing with the tenderest affection for expatriated fellow-countrymen, finding expressions only in harmonious and holy song. They have the singular felicity of touching the tenderest chords of the heart, of evoking its deepest and warmest sympathies, and kindling its partially smothered devotional feelings into a burning holy flame. They are literally a "speaking from the heart to the heart." It is almost impossible for a Highlander to read them through unaffected or unmoved.

Many of the Highlanders who originally immigrated to this Province did not enjoy the benefits of a liberal education. Here they had to contend with numerous and untried difficulties, in order to secure the necessaries of life. They had, therefore, neither time nor opportunity to devote to the improvement of their minds. This being the general and almost necessary condition of the mass, (though some noble exceptions among them, in spite of these difficulties, worked their way up to no ordinary height in literature and science,) these poems enabled them to obtain a correct and comprehensive knowledge of the whole system of divine truth. This was the author's design. While much of the poetry of the present day consists of a mawkish sentimentalism, dreamy fantastic visions, which belong neither to heaven nor earth, vitiating the taste for instructive and substantial reading, and enervating the natural vigour of the mind, these contain in chaste and polished language eternal truths, which are fitted to prepare the soul for the highest state of possible perfection.

In many of the English hymns extant, and even those sung in public worship by Christian assemblies, there is a reduplication of the same idea continued through a number of verses; in these poems every line contains some new or distinct idea. In them there is no "making the most of an idea," or a weary waiting for the inspired gusts, "like angels' visits, few and far between." They seem the productions of a mind continually under the poetic afflatus, with ideas crowding in upon it and struggling for expression.

These, like all other human productions, are not all of equal merit. Some, whether from the nature of their theme, the intensity of the author's poetic inspiration, or the time at his command, stand out in conspicuous superiority from among the best. These are the poems entitled "The Gospel," "The Complaint," "The Last Judgment," "The Righteousness of Christ." The latter we consider the best in the whole number. There are few religious poems superior to it in the English language. It alone is sufficient

to acquire for the author the honourable distinction of "no ordinary poet." There are some passages in it which are remarkable for their poetic beauty and grand sublimity.

These poems were composed amid many difficulties and disadvantages,—excessive ministerial labours,—domestic duties, and public engagements. They display in the author, genius, an extensive knowledge of theology, ardent love to the Saviour, and a sincere desire to promote the eternal welfare of his fellow-countrymen.

The poem on "The Gospel" we have translated as literally as justice to the sense and idioms would permit. As we are merely giving this as an example to the English reader of the nature of these poems, we did not deem it necessary to translate the whole poem; we have therefore only translated fifteen stanzas out of the twenty, which it contains. Each line in English is a translation of the corresponding line in Gaelic.*

Were the Gaelic highly cultivated, there is no language better adapted as a vehicle for poetic inspiration, impassioned eloquence, or expressions of tender and endearing sympathy. Though harsh and unchristian to the English ear, to the Highlander far away from his native hills and mountains it is the true language of nature and of paradise.

These poems immediately became popular among the Highlanders, particularly the pious of them, wherever they were introduced, and are now well known in the north of Scotland, particularly in the west Highlands. Several persons from that quarter have assured me that it is there quite common to hear mothers singing them to their children, as Watts' divine songs are sung in many an English nursery. And we have also been assured by those who have had good opportunities of knowing that they have been very useful in giving to many clear views of the doctrines of the gospel. Ministers who spoke Gaelic, and had associated with Gaelic people, have told me that they have frequently met persons of little education, who yet had accurate conceptions of divine truth, and whose statements of it were modelled by the language of these poems.

We may add here that he was one of the most thorough Gaelic scholars of his day, and that he composed a great deal more in that language which has not been published. We have in our possession a copy of the Westminster Confession of Faith in Gaelic, which seems to have been composed before any edition of it had been published, and which a thorough Gaelic

* These will be found in the appendix to the remains.

scholar has pronounced quite equal to the translation now in use. We have also in our possession versions, in Gaelic metre, of more than a hundred of the Psalms of David, and the most of the Scottish Paraphrases.

We insert here a letter to a friend in Scotland, partly in reference to his Gaelic poems:

Dear Sir:—I was much gratified by your letter received a few days ago. To receive a letter from an Antiburgher minister, a native of Glentarken,* is no common enjoyment. Had such a thing been promised me when I left home I would have had difficulty in believing it. Great are the changes taking place in the Highlands. Different denominations, not excepting the Baptists, find a footing in some of the wildest parts of them. But that dispensation of Providence which scatters the Highlanders over the face of the earth, as it did the Jews, is to me strange and mysterious. Every year since I came here some have been coming this way from Inverness, Ross, and Sutherland, and I have often wondered how our native parish of Comrie enjoyed such a calm. It seems, however, that a scattering blast has come at last. I was quite surprised at your account of the depopulation and emigration of my native vicinity. Here we have little or no connection with Canada, and though you had mentioned the precise spot where they have settled, it is likely that I know nothing about it. Upper Canada, however, is reckoned a good place for emigrants, better than this, the soil being more fertile. Were I to go again to my native place, what a change would I see! I would not find my father's house, and it is likely I would not get a night's quarters in the village without money.† Has the same depopulation taken place throughout the parish of Comrie?

I tremble to think of the chastisement that seems waiting for Britain. Those who are for and those that are against a revolution are strong, and the conflict must be terrible, if undeserved mercy do not interpose. The higher classes have been long teaching the lower to despise God, and it were no wonder that at last they should despise themselves. There are many corruptions to be plucked up, but their roots are so strong, that they cannot to all appearance be plucked without long and violent pulling. A merciful God may, however, deal more mercifully than appearances prognosticate, or men can think. There is surely much need for that prayer, "In wrath remember mercy." In my young days the ministers commonly prayed for the downfall of Prelacy. I do not know if they continue to do so or not. The prayer will surely be answered, but it may be by terrible things in righteousness.

* About two miles from St. Fillan's, where Doctor MacGregor was born.

† Mr. MacNab's remark to me upon this was that he would get it more readily than when he went away—that many would have esteemed it an honour to have had him in their houses.

I am much gratified with what you have written concerning my poor poems, except the incorrectness of the printing, which cannot be helped for the present. Oh may it please the Lord to make them a blessing to my poor countrymen! Do not forget to pray for a blessing with them. I composed these poems in part, travelling through the dreary wilderness of America, hoping they might do some good, but seeing little prospect of it. There are two of them, that on smoking tobacco, and *Comhairle d'n T–l–el*, so insignificant, that I repent of having sent them home. If they have been printed, and should there be a second edition, I wish them suppressed. The three which I sent last, bid as fair in my opinion to be useful, in the way of instruction, as any of them; and I would rather have some of the others suppressed than them. In the event of another edition, you must undertake the correction of the press, somehow or other. If you cannot do it yourself, you must surely know of some good Gaelic scholar about Glasgow who will do it. Most of the Gaelic books are badly printed, which is a great discouragement to readers. The poems have not yet come this way, and I know not whether the mistakes be few or many; but if possible, I will send you a list of the Corrigenda. I would have you to make out a list of them too, lest mine should not reach you. Besides I mean to send you one poem more, viz., on the sin and misery of man by nature; also an additional verse to two or three of those already made. Gratitude requires that I should make a verse for the Tract Society. I wish I had the name of some of your acquaintance in Greenock, to whose care I might send letters or parcels, by which means they might reach you with less risk and cost. You did well to write to me from Saltcoats, for till I received yours I did not know if you had received any of mine.

You say you have some questions to ask about the Church of Nova Scotia, but I believe you had better not ask them, for we cannot give you very pleasant answers. Ours is a poor church indeed, yet we are striving to bring things as near as possible to the inspired rule. We are only organizing a church, and we have but poor materials to work upon. The population of Nova Scotia is of a very heterogeneous kind, consisting partly of natives and partly of emigrants from various countries; the former reared in the woods know nothing, the latter is rather the scum than the cream of the countries they come from. Books and education are scarce. Migration from place to place is common, as land has been hitherto plenty. Extravagance, especially intemperance, is very common. All these things are against us. Hence the government and discipline of our church is more than one step from perfection. Our stipends are so small or so badly paid, that most of us are compelled to take the aid of farming, or teaching for a living. We have not our choice of ministers. A number of them had some reason for leaving home, and coming here. Yet still we are making progress. Above twenty ministers belong to our Synod. We are creeping into better order. Schools are multiplying. And what is truly wonderful we have gotten an Academy established at Pictou, which bids fair to send forth excellent ministers in a short time. Mr.

MacCulloch is killing himself carrying it on. Mr. MacKinlay is more moderate. Our Legislature seem inclined to give it their support, I hope they will give it three or four hundred pounds a year. Grace be with thee.

JAMES MACGREGOR.

P. S. I have just heard that Rev. Mr. Nicol is dead, I believe of a sore in his leg.

CHAPTER XXI.

LATER PUBLIC LABOURS.—1818–1826.

"Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance." 2 Pet. i. 15.

BEFORE proceeding to what we design as the main subject of our present chapter, viz., to give an account of some of his later efforts on behalf of the general interests of the church, we shall insert a letter from him to a friend of his wife's in Scotland, which gives some account of the state of the church at that time, and also shows some of the difficulties which the fathers of our church had to encounter in building up congregations:

EAST RIVER OF PICTOU, *Nov. 26th*, 1822.

DEAR SIR:—I would have written to you long ago the news of our part of the world, but I have always such a throng of work upon my hands, that I am always far behind. Through the good providence of God our family is in good health, at present, as they generally are. Betsey and Jessy Gordon, the two girls, which I got along with Mrs. Gordon, are now grown tall and handsome, almost to the size of women. There is nothing unpromising in their conduct or character, but the reverse. As they are but young, it would perhaps be rash to say any thing more favourable. I have three children by the second marriage (besides six by the first), all to appearance nice good children. We had a fourth child who lived only two or three days. We have no reason to complain, for though our property is not great, we have enough to eat and to wear, and we enjoy more happiness than falls to the generality of our fellow creatures. God has made our lines to fall in pleasant places.

I suppose that you know that a union took place here between the

Burghers and Antiburghers before the union at home. Before the union neither party had any subordinate standards, but the Westminster Confession of Faith. The same continues to be the case since the union. This will not likely please you, but if you were here a while it would. You would see such a mixture of people here from different nations, as throws the state of the church back as far as the days of John Knox. The way in which congregations are formed is somewhat as follows: Providence brings into one neighbourhood, say a dozen of families from the low country of Scotland, two dozen from the Highlands, a dozen from Ireland, a dozen from the United States, a dozen from Canada, a dozen born in the Province, with a few more from England, Wales, Denmark, Germany, &c. Here are different denominations, and different opinions, all uniting to get and maintain a minister, for no one party is able to maintain one. They lived some time, perhaps long, without one, and many of them without a Bible or any religious book. Most of these heads of families are desirous of a minister, for though each is so good as to be able to make a shift without one, yet he is concerned to see his neighbour so bad, and the rising generation so destitute. Every one knows that he cannot get a minister of his own sort, therefore, rather than want, every one agrees to take a good minister of any kind. When the minister comes to them, you may easily see that his church must be a very infant one. Every one thinks he denies himself a great deal as to his peculiar tenets, and thinks himself justified in so doing rather than want the gospel altogether; yet the minister finds every one retaining his professions and prejudices in less or more all their days, insomuch that he must deny himself as much as any of them, in order to be able to stay among them. Though some congregations are more unmixed, yet many are just as I have described.

There is no one country that hath poured so many settlers into Nova Scotia as the North Highlands; and they are in general ignorant, unable to read or write, and very destitute of public spirit. On these accounts they have been a considerable drawback upon our church. Some of them are mixed in every congregation in the eastern end of the Province, and in a few places there are congregations almost wholly made up of them. When I came to this Province, there were only four Presbyterian ministers in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island (then called St. John's), and Cape Breton. Now there are thirty. Five and twenty of them belong to our church, forming one Synod, and four Presbyteries. Of these twenty-five, one is in Cape Breton, four in Prince Edward Island, making a Presbytery, two in New Brunswick, and the rest in Nova Scotia. And because so many belong to us the designation of the church is, The Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia. The other five call themselves of the Church of Scotland, four of them are in this Province and the rest in New Brunswick. If you ask why these are not in our church, since we are simple Presbyterians, I answer, some of them are Arminians, and others of them find it inconvenient.

We cannot boast of great success in the gospel. There are divisions and offences amongst us as in other places, but still we do not labour in

vain. It has been a great loss to us that the General Associate Synod could not, or did not, send to us Gaelic ministers. On this account Highlanders here applied to the Church of Scotland and got ministers, some of whom are not sound, and others too complaisant.

All Pictou was my congregation when I came here thirty-six years ago, now it contains five congregations belonging to our church; and one belonging to the Church of Scotland, merely because we could not get them a Gaelic minister. And I fear there will soon be another for the same reason. God can bring good out of evil, and does it. Had it not been for the difficulty of getting ministers, we would not have thought so soon of providing ministers for ourselves. We have now gotten a college established in Pictou, where we can educate ministers for the church here, and the young men born and taught here will suit the country better than those who come from Scotland. It is but a small college, having as yet but two professors, but they are able and excellent men, fit for their profession, able to give high degrees of learning to the students, and though the college be little, we hope it will grow great, and it has been already so expensive, that it is a wonder we have made it out at all. But God was with us, and stirred up the Government and others to help us above our expectation. We have built a house which cost about fifteen hundred pounds, and we have furnished it with a considerable library, and philosophical apparatus. For some years past we have gotten four hundred pounds from the Government for its support, and we expect that it will be continued annually. We will need every year new books, and new articles to the apparatus, more than we can provide, but the same God who has helped, we hope will still help.

The Church of England is the Established Church, but it is not established here as it is at home, for none are obliged to pay to it but its own people. There is no religion established in North America, as the churches are established in Scotland and England. None is compelled to support any religion except the one that pleases him, and in many places not even that.

In this Province and through almost all North America there are considerable numbers of Wesleyan Methodists—zealous Arminians, and Baptists—zealous Calvinists. Also considerable numbers of Papists; in Canada, by far the majority, for the majority of the people are of French descent. There are in Canada five or six Presbyterian ministers, but there is little communication between us and Canada, and we know little what they are doing. We know in general that religion is there in a very low state.

We know better about the United States, for they have many religious newspapers, some of which we take. The number of religious people there are not many compared with the number of the population at large, but they have a great deal of zeal and activity. They [have] thirteen hundred Presbyterian congregations, but they have [also many] Baptists, and Methodists, and all of them zealous to spread their [principles.] The Associate Reformed Synod have lately joined the Presbyterian [Church.]

Their Bible Societies are endeavouring to supply the whole of North and South America with Bibles. Their Missionary Societies have a great deal of employment. 1st. They send Missionaries to [the new] settlements. It is said that it would require seven thousand ministers [to supply] the vacancies within their bounds. But many places [are small.]* 2nd. They send Missionaries to the heathen Indians [farthest] in the woods, both to civilize and gospelize them. The United States Government have lately become far more friendly to the Indians than they were formerly. They give a good deal of money to teach them reading, &c. They have missionaries in the Sandwich Islands, about twenty degrees to the north and west of Otaheite, where Providence wonderfully opened the door to them, for when they landed they found the idols burnt, and the priest among the foremost to take them by the hand. They have missionaries at Jerusalem, in the East Indies, the Burman Empire, &c. They have many other Societies for which I have not room.

Mrs. MacGregor joins in kindest respects to you and Christy, and other relations. She can never forget your kindness to her father.

I am, Dear Sir, Yours, &c.,

JAMES MACGREGOR.

The present seems a suitable opportunity of remarking that in this year (1822), the Senatus Academicus of the University of Glasgow unanimously resolved to confer upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity, for though we have been hitherto speaking of him as the Doctor, it has only been by anticipation, that we could apply the title to him. This act was honourable to all concerned. Considering the standing of the institution, the rareness with which such honours are sent across the Atlantic from the other side, and the circumstance of its coming unsolicited and unexpected on his part; it could not but be pleasing to his mind, as it was creditable to the institution, that his character, attainments and labours, should be recognized in this manner.

His domestic and congregational history at this period presents nothing requiring particular remark. But it was a time of great activity on his part, on behalf of the general interests of the church. We therefore go back a little to give some account of the principal efforts of this kind. First and chief among the objects which excited his zeal was the Pictou

* The words in brackets we have supplied, as those parts of the letter had been worn away.

Academy. The origin of this institution has been already referred to, and his letters already given manifest his interest in its prosperity. We shall give another extract of the same kind. Writing to Doctor Keir on the 13th March, 1818, he says,

"At present, I have no news but that the Prince Regent has approved of the Act for founding an Academy or College at Pictou. This is a measure which I hope will set our church upon its feet. I hope we shall have ministers of our own raising, from age to age. Oh, what a subject for prayer and praise! The House of Assembly is now sitting, and Mr. MacCulloch is in Halifax trying to get money for it. In my next, I hope to tell you of his success. But should we be disappointed this year, we must persevere, till we be heard for our importunity. I trust the Lord will provide, though we may be put to our shifts. Pray continually for the establishment and enlargement of this Seminary. It is the most convenient to your Island that can be, not to be in it. Solicit donations for it from all sorts of persons, especially rich bachelors, let them leave something handsome in their wills for it."

The institution had now gone into successful operation. But it was doomed to encounter a formidable opposition, to struggle long against fearful odds, and at length to sink in the billows of political contention. It scarcely belongs to our subject to give the history of these struggles. We shall, however, without entering upon details, indicate the source of the opposition, and the nature of the contests which for some time agitated the public mind of Nova Scotia.

At that time the only other institution in the Province, for the teaching of the higher branches of learning, was Kings' College at Windsor, which was under the control of the Church of England. One of the statutes by which it was governed ran as follows, "No member of the University shall frequent the Romish mass, or the meeting-houses of Presbyterians, Baptists, or Methodists, or the Conventicles, or places of worship, of any other dissenter from the Church of England, or where divine service shall not be performed according to the liturgy of the Church of England, or shall be present at any seditious or rebellious meeting." And by another By-Law, degrees were

confined to those who would previously subscribe "the thirty-nine articles" of the Church of England.

From the very commencement of the Pictou Institution, the bishop lent all his influence for its destruction, because, as he said, "on its rise or decline depends the depression or advancement of the College at Windsor." It must be remembered in addition, that not only was the Church of England recognized by law as the Established Church, but wielded almost uncontrolled influence in the Government. The old Council of XII was virtually the ruling power of the country. It sat with closed doors, and possessed both executive and legislative functions, being not only the upper House of the Legislature, but also the advisers of the Governor. Of this body the bishop was a member, and in its measures took an active part, while the large majority of the other members belonged to the same body. While liberal minded members of the Church of England supported the Pictou Academy, yet the majority of the council combined to maintain the monopoly of education which the Church of England had long enjoyed.

Had the fathers of our church, in founding and maintaining the Pictou Academy, placed it in immediate connection with the church, and not looked to the government at all, it would undoubtedly have been feeble for some time, but they would have avoided all the irritating controversies in which they were plunged for years, and the Institution would have gradually acquired strength. But the friends of the Institution looked to the legislature for a charter, and for money to support it. The House of Assembly were always ready to yield to their claims. Grants were given, from year to year, and for several years in succession they passed a bill granting a permanent endowment, but this was as often thrown out in the Council; they at length also negatived the annual vote, which had been given for several years. On one occasion when a permanent bill was sent up, they sent down several amendments, or rather a bill of a different character, excluding Dr. MacCulloch, principal, from the trust, removing all the Trustees, and authorizing the

Governor to appoint others in their room, and reducing the institution to the level of a grammar school. This was of course rejected in the house.

But the most discreditable opposition came from the ministers of the Church of Scotland in the County of Pictou, and their adherents. The latter, as we have seen, were embittered against the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia and its ministers; and their ministers soon went beyond them in virulence. Against the academy their chief efforts were directed, for they justly regarded it as one of the most efficient instruments for building up the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, and its success as proportionally injurious to their own party. They therefore opposed it with a bitterness which posterity will not credit.

The history of the controversy which followed does not properly belong to this memoir. To Doctor MacCulloch belongs the honour of being the chief instrument in maintaining the usefulness, nay, the existence of the Institution for years. It would be impossible in our space, even were it within our sphere, to do justice to his efforts on its behalf. His arduous labours in teaching,—his contending with the old Council,—his numerous appeals through the press,—his voyages across the Atlantic,—his success in rousing the zeal of the Church in Scotland, we must pass over, but it is due to the subject of our memoir, that we indicate the special part which he bore in these struggles.

As we have already seen, he took a deep interest in the institution from its origin. He contributed always liberally to its support, his first subscription being £50—$200; he was a Trustee from its commencement, and took an active part in all the measures for its welfare. His was that enthusiastic nature that could not engage in a measure in which he was interested with half his heart; and during the later years of his life his whole soul seemed occupied by it. Wherever he went, it seemed uppermost in his thoughts, and daily in his prayers at the family altar, whatever subject might be omitted, it

would be strange if the academy did not find a place. "I am not ashamed," he says, "to acknowledge that a day seldom passes, in which I do not commend it in my prayers to God for his protection and favour; and I am confident that he will answer my prayers. I am so confident of it, that though I were to see it dead, I would not despair of its prosperity, for I would believe that it would rise again from the dead."

And as to the opposition to it, though he never manifested any bitterness personally against the men engaged in it, yet he regarded it as something shocking. "It is cruel and unnatural," he says, "for any one who knows the benefit of learning to oppose it. How unnatural would it be for me to wish that country, where I expect my offspring to continue to the end of time, deprived of the means of a good education, and either to consign them to ignorance and wretchedness, or compel them to go to another part of the world for their education! Something far off from natural affection and benevolence, must be the spring of such conduct. To compare small things with great, *it is like eating the forbidden fruit.* It must deprive all future generations of all the good the institution may produce, and entail upon them all the evils from which it is calculated to relieve them." He did not scruple to utter the prayer, "Lord confound them," speaking of course of their plans and measures. And more than once, he made one of those statements, which, viewed in the light of subsequent events, has led many to regard him as having something of a gift of prophecy. He said that the time might come when there would not be a minister of the Church of Scotland in the County. His reason for this opinion was that they were opposing the means of training ministers in this country, so that they could not have them from that source, while they could not expect a continued supply from Scotland. His view was nearly realized. When the disruption came, of eight ministers in the Presbytery of Pictou, one joined the Free Church, and six went to Scotland to occupy the vacant watch-towers there, leaving only a single minister of the body in this

part of the Province, and from that time till the present hour they have been only partially supplied with preaching.

The two addresses which we have given among his remains, are sufficient to indicate his deep interest in the Institution. And his zeal was one principal means of rousing the energies of the church on its behalf. The church at large did not second him in his efforts, but the congregations in the County of Pictou, particularly those in the centre which had enjoyed more fully and regularly his ministry, put forth exertions, which, considering their circumstances at the time, have not been surpassed, and we think not equalled by any efforts of the church here since. These efforts were in a large measure the result of his appeals. Such was the veneration in which he was held, that his recommendation was sufficient to elicit their liberality, and many of them believed that the success of the Institution was more dependent on his prayers, than on Doctor MacCulloch's literary attainments or abundant labours. The late Rev. D. A. Fraser said to a member of my congregation, "You are always talking of Doctor MacGregor, but Doctor MacCulloch is doing more with that Academy for your church than ever Doctor MacGregor did." "Oh, yes," was the reply, "but wasn't it Doctor MacGregor's prayers that brought Doctor MacCulloch there?"

While from this time to the close of his life the Academy absorbed more of his attention than any one object, yet so far from neglecting other Christian Institutions, he was foremost in this part of the world, in founding and maintaining them. The Bible Society still retained its place in his affections, and principally through his exertions something was remitted almost every year, and a number of copies of the Scriptures circulated. But the Committee had not met for some years, and subscriptions had fallen away so much, that he considered the Society extinct. The following is a draft of a letter written to the Secretary of the parent Society on the 6th July, 1823:

"I received your letter of the 11th of March, and some time after the three cases of books, to which it refers, containing one hundred French

Bibles, and five hundred and seventy-three French Testaments, and also fifty English Bibles, and one hundred English Testaments. I had some time before received Mr. Brandram's letter giving notice of the Committee's resolution to send these books.

"I have also to acknowledge the receipt of a letter from Mr. Tarn, of May 7th, 1823, with two cases of books, containing fifty Gaelic Bibles, two hundred Gaelic Testaments, twenty French Bibles, and twenty-seven French Testaments.

"I have written to acknowledge the receipt of another letter of July 31st, 1822, from E. F. Ronnaberg, and two cases containing fifty Gaelic Bibles, one hundred Gaelic Testaments, eighty English Bibles, and thirty-seven English Testaments.

"The sole reason why I did not sooner acknowledge the receipt of these two last mentioned letters with their cases, is that I could send no money to the Committee. The Bible Society here is really dead, but I cannot bear the thoughts of publicly announcing its death yet, as Mr. Dawson and I have some hope that we may yet get it revived. I am ashamed and grieved that we do so little for the Bible Society, or rather that we are such a burden upon it. It is true that there is scarcely any money with us, so that the most willing can do but little. And we have two other objects of great importance to vital religion, which occasion a neglect of the Bible Society, at least for a time: one is an Academy for providing preachers of the gospel for this and the neighbouring Provinces, and the other is a Domestic Missionary Society, for supporting preachers, and supplying weak, scattered, and destitute settlements, with the preaching of the gospel. A Sabbath-school Society is also beginning among us, and we cannot get people to see the propriety of dividing their little mites among four objects. Meantime I beg leave to express to you, my admiration of the exertions of the Bible Society, and of the grace and mercy bestowed upon it by the great Author of the Scriptures. Though some of these auxiliaries may fail as we do, I am confident the promise says to it, 'The Lord will increase you more and more, you and your children.'

"A part of the first two cases before mentioned is yet on hand, also the greater part of the second two, and the whole of the three cases last received. It is extremely difficult to know how to dispose of the Gaelic Bibles. I am loth to give away the Society's property for nothing, and as loth to have the Bibles and Testaments lying on hand, not doing good. None have been sold for their full prices. Part of them have been given away gratis. I have sold a number of them upon credit more than a year ago, to persons whom I knew and believed to be conscientious people, and not altogether poor, and as yet I have not received a farthing of the price of them, so difficult it is to get money."

The Secretary wrote in reply. "The apparently gloomy prospect respecting the dissemination of the Holy Scriptures around you, which you so much lament, was deeply felt by every

member of the Committee; but amidst all, they think that the new Institutions springing up amongst you, 'an Academy to provide gospel ministers, a Domestic Missionary Society, and Sunday-schools,' will ere long create some demand for the stock you hold." He then proceeds to state some particulars of the Society's efforts in translating and circulating the Scriptures.

This letter was the means of reorganizing the Society upon the footing on which it has ever since continued, and accordingly in his next letter, remitting £50 sterling, he says, "In my last I wrote to you that our Society was dead, but your cheering answer to my desponding letter, was the means of reviving it, and I trust it will live."

The Domestic Missionary Society was formed in consequence of the success of the Pictou Academy. Several students were either ready to be licensed or already on the field. It was formed on the idea then prevalent, of conducting the Christian enterprises of the day, not by the church itself but by societies. Its primary rule was, "The Society shall be denominated the Domestic Missionary Society for the Diffusion of Evangelical Doctrine and Presbyterian principles in Nova Scotia, and the adjacent Provinces; and its design shall be, to provide instruction for those who are destitute of the ordinances of religion, to organize them, and to assist them in obtaining ministers, either from the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, or from any denominations of Presbyterians in Scotland." This general basis was adopted in the hope, that the Presbyterian ministers from the Established Church might co-operate in the promotion of its objects.

In this Institution Doctor MacGregor took a deep interest. The following is a copy of a letter from him to Doctor Keir on the subject:

EAST RIVER OF PICTOU, *May 17th*, 1824.

REV. DEAR SIR:—With this I send you one hundred and fifty-six copies of a plan of a Domestic Missionary Society, which you are to dispose of to the best of your judgment; suppose three dozen to yourself, three to Mr. MacGregor, and three to Mr. Douglass, two to Mr. Hyde, one to Mr.

Evans, and one to Mr. MacLennan. You will, however, know best yourself how to dispose of them. We do not expect any co-operation or aid from the ministers of the Church of Scotland here. But I have a notion that Mr. MacLennan is more evangelical and sociable than those here, but I may be mistaken.

Our Presbytery have now nine students of divinity upon trials for license, and I hope that seven of them will soon be licensed. Between New Brunswick and Cape Breton, there is plenty of work for them as missionaries, but little, and in many cases, no wages. It therefore becomes the duty of our church to help them on. A Missionary Society should be formed in every congregation, and every member of the congregation should be a member of the Society. Then we could give some help to the missionaries and for the spread of the gospel. You and your brethren are to put these papers into the hands of such persons, as you and they think will be most zealous and active in promoting the design. You can fold them up as letters, and address each of them to one or more individuals. There is blank space left for adding arguments of your own if you think proper.

There is a prospect that one of these young men shall be called to the Upper Settlement of this river, and that I shall have only one place of preaching in my old age. Should God prosper this prospect, it will be great ground of gratitude. Mrs. MacGregor joins in best respects to Mrs. K. and family, Mr. MacGregor, and Mr. Douglass and their families, and all other friends and acquaintances.

I remain, Rev. Sir, Yours sincerely,

JAMES MACGREGOR.

P. S. There is as much need of fervent prayer as ever.

In carrying out the objects of this Institution, he endeavoured to form local societies in the different congregations, anxiliary to the parent Institution. The following is a copy of a circular sent to different persons for the purpose:

PICTOU, 15*th December*, 1823.

SIRS:—In requesting your attention to the religious state of the Presbyterians of these Provinces, I trust that you will allow the importance of the subject to plead my excuse. Though there are a considerable number of clergymen employed among them, many are still destitute of the means of instruction; and I feel an anxiety, that these, as well as others, should enjoy advantages so necessary to their present and eternal welfare. From an earnest desire, therefore, to promote their religious improvement, I have drawn up the following scheme of a society for this purpose, which I beg leave to submit to you, as friends of the gospel and of Presbyterian principles. I feel satisfied that the design itself will receive your approbation; and as it must be important to the execution of the measure, to concentrate upon it, as extensively as possible, the energy of the Presbyterian popula-

tion, I would respectfully solicit your countenance and aid. He who has supplied us with the bounties of his Providence, and the ordinances of his grace, requires, as a proof of our gratitude to himself, that we impart our enjoyments to the destitute. And of all beneficence, that which diffuses the knowledge of the gospel is the most blessed and permanent in its fruits.

I have the honour to be, Your most obedient servant,

James MacGregor.

Principally by his zeal such congregational societies, and also ladies' penny-a-week societies were formed, which continued for a while, and raised liberal contributions for missionary purposes; but it does appear as if he were ahead of his time, and as if the church here were not prepared for carrying out, efficiently and systematically, those schemes of Christian enterprise, in which she has since engaged so zealously. The ministers in the county of Pictou were almost the only members of Synod, who entered, with heart and mind, into this and the other measures then projected for the extension and perpetuation of the church; and the congregations there almost the only part of the church, that showed any great liberality on their behalf.

About the same time the Pictou Sabbath-school Society was formed. He preached the first sermon before it on the 24th Sept., 1823; of which the following is his outline:

Prov. xxii. 6. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

The world is in continual progress. One generation passeth away and another cometh. A generation neither comes nor goes at once, but by degrees. Every moment some are coming and some are going. But whither do they go? To appear before their Judge, to enjoy the favour or suffer the indignation of God for ever, according as their works have been. It is, therefore, of great importance to train the young generation in the way wherein they should go. Some of them are daily leaving the world prepared or unprepared. Some are leaving the schools and entering the stations of men, where they train others well or ill as they are trained themselves.

We shall [consider] I. What is the way. II. The training, and III. The promise.

I. *The way.* There is only one way of salvation and of duty for young and old. "I am the way, &c." There is such a way as requires all the wisdom of the wise and good to keep within it, and such a way as children can walk in. "The wayfaring men though fools shall not err there-

in." A child must receive Christ Jesus the Lord and walk in him, otherwise he is out of the way in which he should go. His life must be a life of faith upon the Son of God, who loved him, otherwise he does not walk in the way in which he should go. He must have a life of holy obedience, a life of obedience in love. He must grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, according to his capacity and opportunity.

Therefore a child must be diligent to gain acquaintance with the truth —to know Christ as God and man, in his threefold office of prophet, priest, and king; his obedience, sufferings, and death, to be for sinners, to free them from hell and purchase heaven for them; the new birth, his [entering upon] the way wherein a child should go. If one is not born again he cannot see the kingdom of God; the love of Christ [inviting] to the way wherein a child should go. He encourages the love of children, by saying, "Suffer the little children to come unto me," and by saying, "Have ye never read, out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, &c." He took a little child and set him in the midst, saying, "Whoso receiveth one such little child, &c.," and "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, &c." Matt. xviii. 2, 5, 6.

But in order to know Christ as a precious Saviour, children must know their sins, their guilt and follies; and to know their sin it is necessary that they know the law which forbids sin, and they must believe the Bible account of the entrance of sin into the world.

II. *The training.* A child knows no other way until he is taught, but God has made him capable of being taught very young, as we may see by his receiving teaching in temporal things; and he hath provided them parents, friends, and teachers, capable of training them. And an honourable and important charge he hath committed to them. "Take this child and nurse it for me." In training, their minds must be informed and directed.

1. They must be informed of the truths mentioned before, according to their capacity, and in as plain terms as possible. They must be fed with milk not with strong meat. Timothy. His mother taught him to know the Scriptures from his childhood. Those who train must mark if they understand, and when they do not, endeavour to make it plainer. Teach them first easy things.

2. They must be directed and showed how to do their duty. Christ taught his disciples to see, to feel, &c. Hos. xi. 1–4. The way must be strewed with roses. Difficulties and prejudices removed; with a strict adherence to truth; their questions must be answered with discretion.

[1.] By conversation, Deut. vi. 6. "Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children and talk, &c." Religion should be the talk of the parents, that they can say, "We cannot but speak the things which we see and hear." This is too seldom done. The children would mind it like other things, if it were commonly talked of.

[2.] By teaching them to read and understand the word of God, by giving them questions, psalms, &c., to learn and understand, and to teach

them to find Christ in their questions and psalms, since he is really in them.

[3.] By example.—Children are apter to feel example than precept.

III. This is a kind and good promise by the God of love and truth, to induce trainers to train diligently, and children to be trained.

1. This promise is always actually fulfilled when it can be fairly pleaded. It has often been visibly accomplished in the preservation of the children of godly parents, from forsaking the way of duty. The greater part of them will keep the way, (in which they were trained,) but God often exceeds his promise by taking untrained sinners under his gracious charge.

2. It would always be visibly accomplished if there were no fault in the training of parents especially, which prevents the accomplishment of the promise. Good people train their children with great satisfaction till they think them out of danger, and then they slack their hand, and the children find the world too strong for them."

This Society was for several years very successful, and did a large amount of good throughout the County of Pictou and adjoining districts. It employed agents in establishing schools where they did not exist, and in visiting those that did exist; it imported the improved lesson-books, and library-books, published by the British and American Sabbath-school Unions, as well as by private publishers; raised funds which were employed in supplying these books to the poorer settlements. In this way the Society was the means of introducing Sabbath-school instruction in many quarters, and of improving the character of the teaching given in their instructions throughout the country.

It was customary to have an annual sermon preached on its behalf in Pictou. That for 1826 was preached by him, of which the following notice appeared in the Acadian Recorder, for October 21st of that year:

On the evening of Sabbath the 1st inst., there was preached in the Provincial Presbyterian Church, by the Rev. Doctor MacGregor, the annual sermon on behalf of the Pictou Sabbath-school Society. The passage selected as a text was Prov. viii. 17. "I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me." The discourse was highly appropriate, and obviously excited very great interest. This was marked in the countenances of old and young. The earnestness and eloquence of the venerable gentleman seemed to arise in no small degree from the quality

of a great portion of the audience, entering upon human life fraught with painful and dangerous vicissitudes. To guard them against these was the design of his instructions; and with the same view he particularly recommended the Sabbath-school system. He stated that for the space of forty years he had preached the gospel in the district of Pictou, that although he had reason to conclude, that his ministrations had been the means of spiritual benefit to some, that others, though enjoying the same opportunities, had turned out "miscreants and nuisances in society." His conclusion was, that had Sabbath-schools, during all this period, been in existence, and judiciously managed, the amount of Christian morality in the scenes where he had laboured, might have been much greater. The nature of the means employed, as also the extensive experience of past years, indicate the correctness of his sentiment. The society in Pictou is gradually gathering strength. This, the annual reports sufficiently show.

The following extract of a letter, dated Pictou, February 13th, 1827, will show the prosperous state of the society at this time:

"This day the annual meeting of the Pictou Sabbath-school Society was held in the old Presbyterian Church. The report gave a very flattering account of the state of the schools in operation, under the direction of this institution. The number of schools in connection with it is 77, of pupils attending 2335, and of teachers, 198, of whom 19 are females. During the course of last year, the increase of schools is 20; of scholars, 628; and of instructors, 73. Within the same period, books have been imported to the amount of £104, 10s 6*d*, sterling, and the volumes circulated, by donation and sale, are 6950. There are besides libraries attached to many of the schools belonging to the Society.

As long as he lived he took a deep interest in the proceedings of the Society, and took an active part in the promotion of its objects. The Society sank a few years after his death, but not until its work was accomplished, by Sabbath-school instruction having been established as part of the regular congregational machinery throughout the adjoining districts.

In carrying on these Christian enterprises, some even of his brethren in the ministry took but little interest, and he employed tongue and pen in exciting them to greater exertions of

the kind. The following letter of this kind was written to the Rev. Robert Douglass, not indeed because he was remiss in the work, but merely with the view of enlisting him in these undertakings, he having but recently arrived in the country, and been newly settled in the congregation of Onslow :

"Rev. and Dear Sir :—I am sure that if your zeal is not more lively than mine, it is both a sin and shame to you, for you are in your prime and I am far past it. It is true, your missionary excursions have been but short, but still they might give you a specimen of the deplorable state of the country at large, for want of the means of instruction. I have seen the principal places in New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Cape Breton, and I know that they are in a most pitiable condition. In all New Brunswick there are only two Presbyterian ministers, the same in Prince Edward Island, and none at all in Cape Breton. Six Sabbaths and some week-day sermons I believe is all the Calvinistic gospel that ever Cape Breton enjoyed. There are many settlements in it that never heard a sermon. There is the same in New Brunswick, at least a Calvinistic sermon, and I fear the same may be said of several settlements in this Province. Sheffield, after waiting (as they say) twelve years for a minister from the church of Nova Scotia, has petitioned the London Missionary Society.

When God shall ask us, why did you leave all these in your neighbourhood so long without exerting yourselves to obtain ministers for them ?—I know no better answer we can make than Cain's,—"Am I my brother's keeper ?" Cape Breton requires two ministers immediately,—Prince Edward Island, three besides Nicol; New Brunswick, four or five; and this Province four or five. Though these fifteen were had within a year, other fifteen would be needed in the course of four or five years, for there are many settlements now weak, that will by that time be able to receive ministers. Indeed the whole country is fast filling up with sinners, but we seem to be fast asleep, and taking no notice of their growth, nor making any commensurate provision for them. Mr. Sprott, and a poor twenty pounds to help out a Gaelic minister, is all the provision we have made, which at best is very inadequate to the demand. You may think that several of these places I allude to are not able to maintain ministers just now, and I grant it, but the blame is wholly ours, who neglected them ; for had we duly nursed them I believe we might have fifteen congregations in our church, which we have not this day. At the rate that we are going on, we will not supply half of the demand for Presbyterian ministers through this country. And what must be the consequences ? "It must be that enlargement, and deliverance will arise to them from another place, and we shall be confounded." Sheffield, and with it the most of New Brunswick, bids fair to to be lost by our past negligence, and the very thought of it should cover us with confusion, and arouse us to make vigorous efforts for saving the other congregations.

If you ask, what shall I do? the answer to that question is the main design of this letter. I say then, stir up yourself,—your neighbour ministers, and your congregation to earnest prayer and generous contribution for the spiritual good of their destitute neighbours. Take pains to inform yourself and them of the depravation of the country at large, and that its remedy is to be expected from them, or from nobody. Inform them of the amazing exertions of the European Christians, in behalf of their neighbourhood and the world. Inform them of the similar exertions of their brethren in the United States, in behalf of all sorts, especially the Indians, Negroes, Roman Catholics, and the back settlements; besides the missionaries to Jerusalem and the East. Say to them, let us go and do likewise. Now be not angry, neither tell me that I may drive my Highlanders so, but your congregation is not to be so driven;* for you may depend upon it, that it is by information similar to the above, that the spirit of God hath kindled and spread the flame of zeal so wonderfully and beautifully throughout Christendom. Let me tell you that the same flame will spread through Nova Scotia, and through Onslow; but of Onslow I am not certain whether they will be content to rank in the rear, or be emulous of setting the honourable example before their neighbours. Much depends upon Mr. Douglass; if he do his part, the people will do theirs, better than he thinks. If Mr. Douglass thinks they will pay his stipend worse by contributing to the spread of the gospel abroad, he is mistaken, for one duty will not hinder, but further another. Inform your congregation that ten or fifteen ministers are needed in the church here without delay, and that the Synod funds are utterly inadequate to obtain them. Inform them that the growing demand for ministers cannot be answered from home, and of course that they must help to support an Academy for raising them here. Inform them that we need a printing press, to circulate among us and among our neighbours the wonderful works of God, and that it will be their profit, as well as their duty, to contribute their mite to obtain it. Organize male and female penny-a-week Societies without delay, if you have not done it already. Endeavour to make them emulate one another, and other congregations with a holy zeal. Let the money be devoted to whatever religious use the majority of the society thinks best, but endeavour if possible to get the first of the money appropriated for obtaining at least two copies of the Boston Recorder, for circulating religious knowledge through the congregation. It is a weekly paper, containing the religious news of almost all parts of the world, and especially of the United States; and will, I hope, much increase the number of subscribers. It is published by Nathaniel Willis, Rogers' Buildings, Congress Street, Boston. It costs thirteen shillings and one penny half-penny, if paid in advance, that is, within

* The allusion here is to an incident that occurred at a meeting of Synod at Truro. He was, as on many occasions, urging the members to greater exertions for the extension of the gospel, and to stimulate other portions of the church, told what was doing in the congregations in Pictou, when a member of the Truro Presbytery with considerable warmth, exclaimed, "But we cannot drive our people as you do the Pictou Highlanders."

the first month, and three dollars if paid at six months, and I suppose the same if paid at the year's end.

I foresee an objection to these societies in the scarcity of money, but this objection exists every where, and so it need not be an obstacle with you more than elsewhere. Money, or produce which can be turned into money, will be gotten for the most necessary purposes, and for this, if it be thought a necessary purpose. There are societies in ——— and the United States, where some give sheep, others lambs, others pasturage, and others take them to market, &c. Many a shift will be contrived by zealous souls. Our church could raise five hundred pounds annually without being distressed at the end of the year, more than if they raised not one. Twenty congregations of one hundred members paying each a dollar, would make five hundred pounds. With that sum we might do much good:— get the printing press, help to support the academy, and pay the passage of a number of preachers; but, unless we try we can do nothing. "Stir up the gift that is in thee."

I am, Rev. Dear Sir, Yours,

James MacGregor.

In the United States there are many societies for giving education for the ministry to poor, pious young men, who cannot educate themselves, and they find it very profitable to the ministry. Could not your congregation find such a one and educate him?

As the Synod has committed the printing press to me, I mean by-and-by to apply to your societies for aid to obtain it. You will therefore be good enough to give me the names of the presidents of your societies.*

In the year 1824 he was chosen a second time Moderator of Synod, and at the opening of its session in the following year, he preached the sermon which appears among his remains, on Psal. cxxii. 6. "They shall prosper that love thee." This is the only sermon of his that we have fully written out. Those who recollect his preaching, will at once recognize it, as exhibiting his style and mode of thought. It is a sermon which

* As formerly mentioned, among the objects proposed after the formation of the Synod was the obtaining a printing press for the circulation of religious intelligence. The work of collecting money for the object was entrusted to Doctor MacGregor. He entered cordially into the measure, but did not receive a liberal response. A small press was shortly after presented to the Synod by a lady in Britain, and the scheme was abandoned. This press was used for a time in printing Synod documents, and was sent out to the New Hebrides with Rev. Mr. Geddie, the first missionary to that quarter, and is now employed by the mission, on the Island of Erromanga.

in fact pictures himself. It would be scarcely possible to point out any where a sermon in which the author's own character was more clearly delineated. Love to Zion was his great characteristic, and he enjoyed through life a large measure both of spiritual prosperity, and we may even say of temporal. Yet in another point of view, partly from the occasion and the subject, the sermon is not considered as a fair specimen of his usual style of preaching, particularly in lacking the fervent appeals both to saints and sinners, which were so frequent on ordinary occasions.

In the year 1824 he was also permitted to have the expectation expressed in his letter to Doctor Keir realized of having another minister on the East River. The Upper Settlement, including the East and West Branches, was disjoined with his full concurrence, and the Rev. Angus MacGillivray ordained as the first minister there. The two churches in that quarter had been built previous to the division, and when that took place, the claim of the adherents of the Church of Scotland to the use of them half the time had been conceded for the sake of peace. When the ordination of Mr. MacGillivray was appointed to take place in one of them, some of the Highlanders, in their ignorance, imagined that this implied some mysterious union between him and the building, which would endanger the rights of the Church of Scotland. They therefore employed a lawyer to interpose to prevent such a result. The latter was foolish enough to write a letter to Doctor MacGregor on their behalf, with a view to arrest the proceedings of the Presbytery. It is well known that the branch of the Secession, to which he belonged, took very high ground against all interference of the civil power with the church. His old Antiburgher feeling seems to have been roused by the attorney's conduct, which he regarded as both uncalled for and absurd, and it would appear as if he had determined to follow Solomon's advice, (Prov. xxvi. 5,) and give him such an answer as his impertinence deserved. On the evening previous to the ordination, the brethren were as-

sembled at his house, when he mentioned that he had received such a letter. "And I suppose," said Doctor MacCulloch, "that you sent him one of your soft, slippery answers." "If you choose I will read to you what I have written," was his reply. "Let us hear it then." He accordingly read a copy of his reply something to the following effect, "Sir, I have received a letter from you, but it is so badly written that I am unable to read it. But what I have been able to decipher contains so little sense, that I would decidedly advise you, for the future, to mind your own business and leave the affairs of the church alone." — "That's enough," said Doctor MacCulloch.

Nothing more was heard of legal proceedings, but during the ordination services one man stood up and proclaimed aloud, "I protest in the name of the Church of Scotland against your marrying that man to this church." Doctor MacGregor said mildly, "Oh, we do not marry him to the walls of the church, it is to the people." The man called upon his friends to follow him, and left the church followed by two or three others.

This settlement gave him great pleasure, not only as relieving him of a portion of his labours, but also on account of the people in that quarter, whose numbers had so increased, that they required a separate minister. On parting with them he preached a tender and affectionate farewell discourse. He reviewed his labours among them, and contrasted the results upon them in this world and the next. Some who had sat under his ministry had profited by it, and he had no doubt were now in glory; while others, pursuing a different course, he had as little doubt were now in the place of misery. In this solemn manner he pressed upon them attention to the gospel of God's Son, as hereafter to be proclaimed to them by another. He also gave them a number of advices as to their duty toward their new minister, and urged them to liberality in his support, and for the extension of the gospel,

calling upon them to mark the fact, that while those, who had been zealous in the support of the church were now the most thriving in their worldly circumstances, those who had from the first disregarded this duty were now worth nothing.

CHAPTER XXII.

CLOSE OF LIFE—1825–1830.

"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing." 2 Tim. iv. 6—8.

Our narrative now draws to a close. But a few incidents remain to be noted. From the date of Mr. MacGillivray's ordination, there was but the one church in which he statedly preached, and he was thus in his old age relieved of the toilsome labours of his former years. This church, we may remark, had been built in the year 1803, on the east side of the river; and stood till recently, as many of our readers will remember, just opposite the Albion Mines.

We have not felt it necessary to refer particularly to his discharge of pastoral duty, since the first years of his ministry, because the description given of his labours then, will apply to subsequent periods, with the exception of such changes as the progress of the country and the improvement among the people induced. The congregation, as we have seen, was gradually contracted within narrower limits, so that he did not need to spend his nights from home. Roads had been formed, so that travelling was now comparatively easy, till at length about the year 1822, some of the leading men in his congregation combined to make him a present of a gig, which was the second on

the East River, and which served him during the remainder of his days. The people, with the exception of the new settlers, had now generally become comparatively comfortable in their worldly circumstances, so that he was not now subjected, either at home or when among them, to the privations of his early years. They had also made considerable advance in religious knowledge, and were regular in the discharge of the duties of Christianity. So that his work was not to lay the foundation by instructing them in the first principles of the oracles of God, nor to form their religious habits; it was rather to build them up and establish them in the faith which they had embraced.

We may remark, that, with the exception of the great outbreak in his congregation by the arrival of the ministers of the Kirk, his congregational affairs in general moved on with a calm and uniform course. There were such small difficulties as will occur in every Christian society. His people were nearly all Highlanders, whose tempers are at least peculiar. But being a thorough Highlander himself, he knew exactly how to manage them, and his influence among them was unbounded. Offences did come, but seldom had they any reference to himself. But his tact and conciliatory manner were generally successful in removing them without much difficulty.

He had now come to old age, and though the hardships of his early years had impaired the vigour of his constitution, yet he was still able for the efficient discharge of all his pastoral duties. He did not, however, travel to great distances from home; his last journey of any length of which we have any account, was to Musquodoboit in the year 1823, as one of a commission of Synod, to decide some matters in dispute between the congregation there and their minister. He still, however, visited neighbouring congregations, assisting at sacraments, or appealing to their liberality in support of the measures of the church. On behalf of all forms of Christian effort, his zeal was as ardent as ever, and his activity scarcely diminished. His preaching had lost but little of the animation of his early

years, but this was more than compensated by the deeper tenderness of his tones, and by the venerable appearance which age had lent to his form, while all that he said produced a deeper impresssion from the universal esteem, which his character and labours had excited. In his general bearing the ardour of youth had been mellowed by years into a heavenly meekness and calmness of spirit. Still his soul fired against any dishonour done to his Master, and he reproved sin in all classes as boldly as ever. About this time a gentleman from Britain, having, in company with a relative of his own, built a vessel a little below where now stands the village of New Glasgow, launched her on the Sabbath. He was much hurt, and not only did he write a faithful letter to each of them, but the first time they went to church they heard their sin set before them in a sermon on the words, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

We can scarcely exaggerate the respect with which he was now commonly regarded. Few men had the art of gaining affection as he had. Among the inhabitants of Pictou generally, with the exception of the new settlers, who formed the Kirk party, his influence was unbounded. That Doctor MacGregor said so, was sufficient to settle all disputes. Perhaps this was more marked from the large proportion of the people being Highlanders, or their descendants, a people who seem peculiarly inclined to strong attachments of this kind. "We just thought," said one man to the writer, "that he could raise the dead." And now that he had a hoary head which was truly a crown of glory, he was universally regarded as "such an one as Paul the aged." Not only through Pictou, but through a large portion of this and the neighbouring colonies, he was regarded with the most loving veneration, such as we might suppose the apostle John received in his old age from the churches of Asia. By his brethren in the ministry he was looked up to as a father, and by the church at large, almost as its founder. Visitors to the county felt it their privilege to see and converse with him as a notability, and we have met with

persons even in the United States, who from such interviews had carried away ineffaceable impressions of the loveliness of his christian character. Yet all the honour and respect shown him, never seemed to kindle a single emotion of vain glory in his bosom, or to produce any other spirit than that of him, who while proclaiming himself as having laboured more abundantly than all his brethren, yet regarded himself "as less than the least of all saints."

His own feelings at this time were such as any man might envy. The affection and esteem with which he was greeted on all hands would have been gratifying to any mind; but especially pleasing was it to him, to look back upon the changes which had taken place in his sphere of labour, and to behold what God had accomplished by his instrumentality. How different was now the physical state of the country!—smiling farms and villages had taken the place of the primeval forest. But especially might he be delighted to see the moral wilderness rejoicing and blossoming as the rose. Where he had been a solitary labourer, ministering to a few lonely dwellers in the wood, he now saw a community marked by intelligence, virtue, and religion; and far beyond, where he had planted with much toil and watered with many tears, he saw flourishing Christian societies. He saw a Synod formed, and a church united in measures for the promotion of the kingdom of the Redeemer, and he saw the assurance of her permanence in an institution for the training of her future ministry. Often did he speak with the liveliest gratitude of what his eyes had seen.

Still he had to suffer what every aged person must endure, the pain of separation from those who have been the companions of his prime. From time to time, one after another of those who had shared his early trials, and had been his comfort and support in the days of trial, preceded him to the presence of his Master. In a New Year's address, about this time, he speaks of their having lost during the previous year two of their elders, and "best friends of the church ever since the gospel came to Pictou." About the year 1827, Robert Mar-

shall was called away, and about the same time Donald MacKay finished his course. On the Sabbath after the latter was buried, the Doctor in commencing his discourse alluded to the event, and said that he might say, as David, "Know ye not that a prince and a great man is fallen in Israel."

After referring to his character, he particularly adverted to his services to himself, and said, that, but for him, he believed that he would have stumbled or given up altogether.

Still, in such cases the pain of separation was alleviated by the prospect of an early reunion; and he loved to think and speak of them as in heaven, and of the near prospect of being with them. Travelling once in company with David Fraser, student, they came to a point where their roads diverged. As they were about to separate, he asked the latter how far he intended to go that night? "To Robert Marshall's," was the reply, the place being still known by his name, though he was dead. The Doctor paused for a moment, as if in thought, and then repeated his question. "To Robert Marshall's," was again the reply. "If you are going to Robert Marshall's, you must go to heaven, and I am going no farther!"

A reference to two more subjects will complete our notice of his public life. The first of these to which we mean to direct attention, is the unfavourable position which dissenters and dissenting ministers then occupied, both in this and the neighbouring Provinces. We are led to advert to this point here, by a circumstance, which, for the sake of the party concerned, we would have been disposed to pass over, but which we shall advert to, as illustrating this feature of his times. At present, happily all denominations of Christians in these Colonies, are upon a level as to civil rights. It was not so, however, in Doctor MacGregor's days. The Church of England was not only recognized as the Established Church, but it possessed the ear of Government, and was enabled to thwart the efforts of dissenters to obtain the same privileges as others. The effect of this we have seen in the old Pictou Academy struggles. Dissenters were thus for a long time the objects of suspicion on

the part of the higher authorities, and their ministers were under disabilities, particularly as to the celebration of marriage. In a memorial to the United Secession Church, from a Committee of Synod, of which Doctor MacGregor was one, it was said:

"Sustaining the character of Seceders, except in the establishment of the Seminary in Pictou, we have been thwarted in every application to Government, which has had for its object either a removal of grievances or the advancement of the interests of our church. Some years ago we who reside in Nova Scotia, applied to our Colonial Legislature to be relieved from certain restraints with respect to the celebration of marriage. An act in our favour was accordingly passed, but when it was transmitted to Britain, for His Majesty's approbation, there went with it a representation from the Established Church, that we were Seceders, and the Royal assent was withheld. * * We may also add that the same cause which prevented our success with His Majesty's ministers operates powerfully against us, in the minds of our Provincial authorities. The enemies of Presbyterians possess their ear; and we have neither opportunities, nor that respectability of position, which might enable us to counteract the influence of misrepresentation and prejudice in those circles, where we are known only by report."

All the early ministers found themselves under the necessity, for the sake of avoiding greater evils, of solemnizing marriage; and they generally did it in the manner prescribed by law in Scotland, though it was not strictly legal here. The practice was generally permitted, but some of the Church of Scotland ministers, who had arrived in the Colonies, though in reality dissenters here themselves, began to assume airs of superiority; and, instead of combining to obtain for their fellow-Presbyterians the same privileges as others, endeavoured to rivet upon them the disabilities under which they were lying. One of them in New Brunswick accordingly wrote to Doctor MacGregor the following letter:

———, N. B., *February* 21*st*, 1825.

Dear Sir:—At the request of Mr. John MacArthur, farmer, parish of Sussex, Kings County, in this Province, I now address you:—I baptized three children for him lately, and found upon inquiring that he had been married by you about twenty years ago. It immediately occurred to me, that, according to the Marriage Act of this Province, he was not legally married, inasmuch as the act above referred to limits the power of celebra-

ting marriage to the Established Clergy of the Church of England, and Justices of the Quorum, but does not prevent such celebration by ministers of the Church of Scotland, *regularly ordained according to the rites thereof*. Any other person celebrating or assisting in the celebration of marriage is declared liable to prosecution, and must forfeit to his Majesty a sum not exceeding one hundred pounds, nor less than fifty, and must be imprisoned for twelve months. Mr. M. and his friends have long been uneasy on the subject, and as I was anxious to know if there was any clause in the act that could relieve them, I consulted with a professional gentleman on my return to town, and found unfortunately that his opinion was that the marriage was illegal,—that you were liable to the penalty,—and that there was no remedy for Mr. M., but by having the ceremony again performed by an authorized person. Meantime he has requested me to ask you to send a certificate of his marriage.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, sincerely.

——— ———.

We will not stay to characterize this letter as we think it deserves. But let our readers mark the statements of the letter, that the marriage was null, and the party solemnizing it liable to fine and imprisonment; and compare with this the request to Doctor MacGregor to send a certificate that he had so solemnized this marriage, and they may form their own conclusion. On the back of the letter is the following by Mr. MacKinlay:

Dear Father:—I think ——— ——— has little to do. He is anxious to promote a party. Religion does not seem to be his object. I would send no certificate. *This is only a snare for you*, although there is not a particle of danger. You had better not be in a hurry in sending him an answer. When Doctor MacCulloch returns we will consult about it.

Dear Father,—Yours, &c.,

John MacKinlay.

What further correspondence took place we know not, but, notwithstanding this writer's zeal for the maintenance of the law, the Province of New Brunswick was saved the shame of fining and imprisoning for twelve months, a minister of Christ for lending the sanctions of religion to the marriage contract.

The other subject connected with his public labours, to which we mean to advert, is the operations of "the Glasgow

Society (in connection with the Established Church of Scotland) for promoting the religious interests of the Scottish settlers in British North America." Of this Society Doctor Robert Burns, then of Paisley, now of Toronto, was Secretary and the chief moving power. We at once admit that the object of the Society was good, that there was much need of such efforts for the supply of the spiritual destitution of the Colonies, and we are not in the least disposed to impugn the motives of its founders and supporters. Nor are we disposed to deny that it was the means of doing much good in other colonies, and in supplying the destitute portions of this colony, particularly Cape Breton; though under wiser management, the good accomplished might have been greater. But still we must say, that as far as the sphere of operations of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia was concerned, the whole system pursued by this Society was unjust. Its leading principle was to supply ministers of the Church of Scotland to the colonies, and to build up an interest in connection with that body. But when a Presbyterian body was already organized here on the broad basis of our common Presbyterianism, which was putting forth most praiseworthy efforts to overtake the destitution around, and to train a ministry for the next generation, and which would welcome sound Presbyterian ministers from the Church of Scotland, as readily as from other Presbyterian bodies, to enter upon the same sphere, merely to build up their own sectarian peculiarity was schism in the sight of God, and could only be expected to prove disastrous to the cause of Presbyterianism, and dishonouring to the religion of Christ.

But the mode in which its operations were carried on rendered matters much worse. It must be granted that there was a necessity of extending pecuniary aid to the poorer settlers. But this aid was often granted in such a way as to prove an encouragement to the latter to slackness in their own efforts. As Doctor MacGregor remarks, "To make a poor enough mouth was all that was thought requisite to ensure the Society's bounty. It is a fact, that at least one settlement agreed to

subscribe one half only of what they believed themselves able to pay, lest otherwise they should not be thought poor enough." The tender of £50 per annum, and a minister from the Church of Scotland, was freely made all round, even to settlements which had been receiving supply from the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, and in such a way as held out a bonus to separation. Some congregations of that body, when they came vacant, feeling their weakness for the support of a minister, yielded to the enticement, and others were divided.

But this was not the worst. We have already described the commencement of division among Presbyterians in Pictou. The men who had caused it, were taken by the hand by the Society; and were aided in all their schemes, particularly in their efforts to destroy the Pictou Academy, on account of its furnishing ministers to the Presbyterian Church. Doctor Burns himself joined in sneering at native preachers, and persisted in sending out men, whom he has since described in the very lowest terms.

Under these circumstances the Committee of Missions of our Church, of which Doctor MacGregor was a member, transmitted to the Directors of the Society, by the hands of Doctor MacCulloch, a memorial on the subject of the course which they were pursuing. Believing the supporters of the Society to be acting with the most upright intentions, but at the same time under misapprehension of the state of matters here, the Committee set before them a large amount of information regarding the condition of the Colonies, pointed out defects in the plans of the Society, represented the evils of the system they had adopted, and affectionately urged a different course. This memorial was disregarded, if not treated with contempt, and a sharp controversy ensued between Doctor MacCulloch and Doctor Burns. Doctor MacGregor also wrote the letter which appears among his remains. It describes, in the mildest spirit, the evils which must ensue from the system pursued by the Society, and affectionately pleads for union among Presbyterians.

Doubtless the chief blame of these evils rests with the So-

ciety's agents and correspondents in this country. They sent home the most exaggerated accounts of the destitution in this Province—and poisoned the minds of the Directors of the Society against the church here, and particularly against the Pictou Academy and the ministers trained in it; in fact, wrote home what Doctor Burns has since described in his own expressive way, as "great lies." But the Society was not guiltless. They would give no heed to information furnished by other parties in circumstances to know the truth, they trusted their correspondents, even after their gross misrepresentations had been exposed, and they plainly showed, that in the spirit of High Church exclusiveness, they disdained all co-operation with those whom they despised as Dissenters.

For a time the efforts of the Society were successful, so that in 1833 a Synod was formed in connection with the Church of Scotland. But the end showed that the basis of the system was unsound. In 1843 came the disruption of the Church of Scotland, when the prophecy of Doctor MacCulloch, regarding the ministers sent out by that Society, that "a presentation would show them to be but wayfaring men," was abundantly fulfilled. A large proportion of them returned to Scotland, to occupy the vacant watch-towers there. In the meantime their efforts had been successful in destroying the Institution, which, if it had been properly sustained, would have afforded a supply of faithful preachers. Presbyterianism was thus left with ranks broken, with much ground lost, and with an ill savour from the divisions among its adherents. Both bodies found themselves in 1844 in the position that the oldest was in 1816, of having to begin to found an Institution for the training of a native ministry, and as to union, we are not in this year 1859 in the same position in which our fathers were in 1817.

We may here record some experiments, which he made about this time, which will show his active and inquisitive turn of mind. His farm, it had been discovered ere this, was situated over a bed of coal. In a small pool of water, not far distant from his house, there was observed a bubbling up of gas. The

Doctor began to make experiments on it. He first took a tub, or half a puncheon, and inverted it in the water. In this he had a hole bored and a pipe stem inserted. In the end of the pipe stem he put a pin, until the tub became so full of gas, as to be nearly raised out of the water. He then drew out the pin and lit the gas, when it burned beautifully and brilliantly for a time. This he did on several occasions for the amusement of himself and others. Near this, and only a few rods from his own house, there was a small stream of water, where it was discovered that the gas was more abundant. The boys used to fill a puncheon, and when lit, as in the last case, it would burn for a length of time. It afforded them a fine amusement, when the puncheon was full to turn it over, and throw into it a lighted paper. It produced a high and brilliant blaze, which could be seen for a considerable distance around. He then conceived the idea of introducing it into his house. He got wooden pipes made, but those whom he employed to make them, had no way of boring them out of a solid piece, and the only plan they could adopt, was to dig out channels in two flat pieces and join them together. But in this way it was scarcely possible to make them tight. He managed, however, by means of them to get the gas into his house, and it would burn in the cellar, or at the door step, but he never succeeded in getting it to burn in any of the rooms. He then imported gas fittings and leaden pipes, but the quantity of the latter sent was quite insufficient, and before he got another supply, circumstances occurred to interrupt his plans, and they were never resumed.

An event must now be mentioned which caused an important change in his worldly circumstances, viz., the commencement of the operations of the General Mining Association. In the year 1826, that company obtained a lease of the mines and minerals of the Province, and in the following year sent out their first agent, Mr. Richard Smith, to open their works at the East River. The spot chosen for their first operations was close by the residence of Doctor MacGregor, and Mr. S. boarded in his house for some time, as the only suitable one

near. The Doctor took a deep interest in what he was doing, and delighted to converse with him as to his projects, and their results upon the future progress of the country. On his first arrival in the Province, he seemed to have regarded his field of labour as unimportant, and likely to yield but little fruit; but after he had been a few years here, and saw the progress which the country was making, he formed a more enlarged conception of its capabilities, and future destinies, and this naturally led to higher views of the importance of the special work assigned him in the Providence of God. He felt himself labouring for posterity—as sowing seed which would bear fruit to many generations—as laying the foundations of a structure which was to grow wider and higher through all time. Having long before learned to expect great things as to the future of this country, he was now deeply interested in the prospect, now opening, of its more rapid progress, by the development of resources, hitherto lying dormant and almost unknown.

But another change became requisite. His farm became necessary for the operations of the Association, and a few months after, at the solicitation of Mr. Smith, he agreed to sell it for the sum of £1150 ($4600). He was, however, to occupy the house till he had time to build another. He sold off all his farm stock, with the exception of one or two cows, and bought a small piece of ground on the opposite side of the river, and near the church, on which he built a cottage, in which he spent the remainder of his days. We cannot but remark the kindness of Providence in supplying his temporal necessities. He had through life manifested the utmost self-denial; he had never grasped at stipend, he had cheerfully borne losses, and had liberally given in charity and for the promotion of the cause of God. Yet he had always been abundantly provided for, and now by a remarkable providential dispensation, depending on the simple fact of his just obtaining his farm on that spot, he was in his old age put in possession of a sum larger than he had ever expected to possess—sufficient not only for the comfort of his own declining years, but also to provide for

the last days of his widow, to educate the younger children who at his death were unable to provide for themselves, and to bring them forth to fill stations of respectability and usefulness in society.

We must, however, now come to the closing scene. Doctor MacGregor enjoyed uninterrupted health till the year 1824, when symptoms of cancer appeared in his lower lip, rendering a surgical operation necessary. The wound was soon healed and the cure proved effectual. He retained his usual soundness of constitution till the 13th of February, 1828, when he was suddenly prostrated by a severe stroke of paralysis. He had been holding a diet of examination at MacLellan's Brook. The day had been very cold and he had walked home. Whether the exertion had affected him or not is uncertain, but in the evening he remarked that he felt a strange sensation in his head, and went to a basin to bathe it in cold water. Soon after he was completely paralyzed. For several days he was unable to speak, and gave no indication of consciousness, except by the moans which he uttered, under the extremely active treatment, to which his medical attendant felt it necessary to resort. For some weeks he was entirely laid aside from public duty, and it may be remarked that till this time he had only been prevented from preaching on two Sabbaths, one of these being on the occasion of his first wife's death. His mind was also for a time greatly enfeebled,—his memory being especially affected. By the blessing of God upon the means employed, however, his health was soon in a great measure restored, but his whole right side was ever after partially paralyzed. There was always a feeling of numbness in it, and a peculiar pricking sensation which he compared to what is felt in a limb, when the circulation has been for a time arrested. This state of his right side caused a partial lameness during the rest of his days. He also regained in a great measure his mental vigour, but his memory of names he never recovered. He could not even name his own children, and what is somewhat singular, he very often called one by the name of another.

In a short time he resumed his public duties in his congregation, and continued to discharge them till the week of his death, visiting, catechizing and preaching as formerly. During this period his preaching was of a peculiar character. In intellectual power many thought his discourses equal to the performances of his early days. In this respect the only marked feature, and it was one which he felt more than was apparent to others, was the difficulty, from the state of his memory, of recollecting the course of thought which he had traced out for himself. He wrote out a sketch of his sermon, but was obliged to keep his finger on his MS., following what he had written, in order to retain the thread of his discourse. On one occasion he could not find his text. He opened the Bible and turned over the leaves, looking for it but without success. He then said that he had forgotten where his text was, but he knew the subject of it, and turning to another text, he preached with his usual earnestness and vigour. It was remarked too that he recollected the scriptures almost as well as ever, and quoted them as freely and as fully as ever, but he could not recollect the names of the writers, and did not attempt to name the books from which his quotations were taken. But the feature which chiefly characterized his preaching, was the heavenly spirit which breathed through all he said. He felt the sentence of death in himself. He knew that in a very short time he must preach his last sermon, and that at any moment he might be cut down, and he preached "as dying unto dying men." He might be described as dwelling in the land Beulah, and he addressed his fellow-men as on the very verge of heaven, and as if he already breathed the air of the better land.

The same spirit was manifest in private. He still studied, but a tendency to lethargy, and the difficulty of writing from the paralyzed state of his right hand, partially unfitted him for this work. He was thus left more to meditation, and his thoughts seemed to be much in heaven. He showed the same gift, which he had always possessed, of giving conversation a religious turn, but now heaven was his chief theme. One day coming up to

the Academy, where a number of the students were standing, they spoke to him, asking him how he was? "Oh," he said, "very well, except this poor side, but one moment of heaven will be worth it all." Sometimes, when musing,—on the clock striking, he would say, "I have been here another hour." In the evening after tea, he commonly sat with his right side to the fire, and frequently slept till the time of family worship. A gentleman who lodged in his house the winter before he died, was surprised on one of these occasions by his breaking out into prayer in his sleep. The prayer was of considerable length, and had all the characteristics of a family prayer. It was slightly incoherent, but only sufficiently so to indicate that he was asleep. On enquiry of Mrs. MacGregor, he was informed that he frequently prayed in his sleep. One morning a few days before his death,—his daughter, about fifteen years of age, said to him, "O father, I dreamed that you were a king, and that they were putting a crown on you." "Oh," said he in a most pleasant manner, "I will soon be better than a king, and wear a crown of glory."

His condition at this time cannot be better presented than in the description given by the immortal dreamer of the state of the Pilgrims when in sight of the City:

"Now, I saw in my dream, that by this time the Pilgrims were got over the enchanted ground, and entering into the country of Beulah, (Isa. lxii. 4–12. Song ii. 10–12,) whose air was very sweet and pleasant. The way lying directly through it, they solaced themselves there for a season. Yea, here they heard continually the singing of birds, and saw every day the flowers appear in the earth, and heard the voice of the turtle in the land. In this country the sun shineth night and day; wherefore this was beyond the valley of the shadow of death, and also out of the reach of Giant Despair; neither could they from this place so much as see Doubting Castle. Here they were within sight of the City they were going to; also here met them some of the inhabitants thereof; for, in this land the shining ones commonly walked, because it was upon the borders

of heaven. In this land also, the contract between the Bride and Bridegroom was renewed; yea, here, "as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so doth their God rejoice over them." Here they had no want of corn or wine, for, in this place they met with abundance of what they had sought for in all their pilgrimage. Here they heard voices from out the city,—loud voices, saying, 'Say ye to the daughters of Zion, Behold thy salvation cometh! Behold his reward is with him.' Here all the inhabitants of the country called them 'the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord, sought out, &c.'

"Now as they walked in this land, they had more rejoicing than in parts more remote from the kingdom to which they were bound; and drawing near to the City, they had yet a more perfect view thereof. It was builded of pearls and precious stones, also the streets thereof were paved with gold; so that by reason of the natural glory of the city, and the reflection of the sun-beams upon it, Christian with desire fell sick. Hopeful also had a fit or two of the same disease. Wherefore here they lay by it a while, crying out because of their pangs, 'If ye see my beloved, tell him that I am sick of love.'

"But being a little strengthened and better able to bear their sickness, they walked on their way and came yet nearer and nearer, where were orchards, vineyards, and gardens, and their gates opened into the highway. Now as they came up to these places, behold, the gardener stood in the way; to whom the Pilgrims said, 'Whose goodly vineyards and gardens are these?' He answered, 'They are the King's, and they are planted here for his own delights, and also for the solace of Pilgrims.' So the gardener had them into the vineyards, and bid them refresh themselves with the dainties (Deut. i. 23, 24); he also shewed them there the King's walks, and the arbours where he delighted to be, and here they tarried and slept.

"Now, I beheld in my dream that they talked more in their sleep at this time than ever they did in all their journey; and being in a muse thereabout, the gardener said even to me, 'Wherefore musest thou at the matter? It is the nature of the

fruit of the grapes of these vineyards, "to go down so sweetly as to cause the lips of them that are asleep to speak."

"So I saw that when they awoke, they addressed themselves to go up to the city. But, as I said, the reflection of the sun upon the city, (for the city was pure gold,) (Rev. xxi. 18; 2 Cor. iii. 18,) was so extremely glorious that they could not, as yet, with open face behold it, but through an instrument made for that purpose. So I saw that, as they went on, there met them two men in raiment that shone like gold, also their faces shone as the light.

"These men asked the Pilgrims whence they came; and they told them. They also asked them where they had lodged,—what difficulties and dangers, what comforts and pleasures, they had met in the way; and they told them. Then said the men that met them, 'You have but two difficulties more to meet with, and then you are in the city.'"

At length he reached the brink of the river, but his passage across was neither long nor stormy. He continued to discharge all the duties of the ministry till the very close of life, having been engaged in pastoral visitation but a few days before his death, and having on the Sabbath previous preached with more than ordinary vigour. On that day being the 28th February, 1830, his texts were in Gaelic, Rom. v. 10; and in English, Eph. ii. 7, 8, and he preached in a manner which, considering the debilitated state of his health, surprised the congregation. On Monday the Rev. John I. Baxter, being then a student of Theology, spent the evening with him reading Hebrew. After Mr. B. left, he engaged in family worship. The Presbytery was to meet next day, and he was as usual looking forward with eagerness to the prospect of meeting his brethren. He had just given directions to Mrs. MacGregor to prepare his clothes for him for the next day, and was preparing for the repose of the night, when he was visited with another paralytic stroke. Suddenly his bodily frame was shaken, the features of his face were distorted, his power of expression was gone, and he was in the act of falling on the hearth, when Mrs. MacGregor, being

in the room at the time, caught him in time to prevent his fall. Medical aid was promptly called in, but the physician at once pronounced his case hopeless. After this he may be said to have held no communication with his family. He survived, however, apparently in great agony, though probably unconscious either of mental or bodily sensation, till Wednesday forenoon, when he entered into the joy of his Lord.

From the manner of his death there was no opportunity of his giving one of those death-bed testimonies, so comforting to friends, so useful to survivors, and so honouring to religion. But we are reminded of an anecdote of Whitefield, which seems to suit this case. In the last visit but one which he paid to America, he spent a day or two at Princeton, under the roof of the Rev. Doctor Finley, the President of the College there. After dinner the Doctor said, "Mr. Whitefield, I hope it will be very long before you will be called home, but when that event shall arrive, I shall be glad to hear the noble testimony you will bear for God." "You would be disappointed, Doctor," said Whitefield, "I shall die silent. *It has pleased God to enable me to bear so many testimonies for him during my life, that he will require none from me when I die.* No, no, it is your dumb Christians, that have walked in fear and darkness, and thereby been unable to bear a testimony for God during their lives, that he compels to speak out for him on their death-beds."

We will not say that this is any thing like a universal rule of God's procedure. Yet when we consider how Chalmers and Whitefield, and others of the most laborious of his servants, have been summoned away in the midst of their toils, without being permitted to give any death-bed testimony to the power of the gospel, we feel as if it were not uncommon in the arrangements of divine wisdom that those who have been most abundant in labour, should leave their testimony for God in their lives of usefulness. "Their works do follow them."

Yet his whole course from the time of his first attack of paralysis was a death-bed testimony, and that of the most de-

lightful and impressive kind. It was the walk of one who felt himself daily on the verge of eternity, and who lived almost as if his spirit had crossed its threshold. On calmly reviewing the whole then, we may say with the poet

> Fitting close
> For such a life! His twelve long sunny hours
> Bright to the edge of darkness; then the calm
> Repose of twilight and a crown of stars.

Thus died James MacGregor, and we may say that few men have been more warmly loved while living, and more deeply mourned when dead. Hundreds of homes were filled with weeping, at the intelligence of his sudden departure. Not only in the county of Pictou, but far beyond, multitudes of all classes —the old, with whom he had shared the privations of their early settlement,—the middle aged, who in youth had learned from him their first lessons in spiritual things—and the young, who had been taught from infancy to pronounce his name as something sacred, but whose reverence had been tempered by affection as he moved among them, alike mourned him as a father and a friend; while from those interested in the affairs of that church, in whose welfare he felt so lively an interest, and for whose establishment he had laboured so zealously, there arose a cry, like that of the sons of the prophets, on the ascension of Elijah, "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof."

On the Saturday following, "devout men carried him to his burial and made great lamentation over him." The funeral was the largest ever known in this part of the country, and, with all the increase of population, and all the increased facilities for intercourse, probably the largest that has yet taken place in the Province, it having been calculated that there were scarcely less than two thousand persons present. "I shall never," said the Rev. John MacKinlay, "forget the peculiarly imposing solemnity of the procession—a dark, dense column of mourners, headed by a few venerable individuals, the par-

ticular friends of the deceased, slowly advancing, under a brilliant sun, and along the pure, dazzling snow, to the sacred spot where his mortal remains shall repose till the resurrection."

By appointment of Presbytery, the Rev. Duncan Ross, now the senior minister of the district, preached on Sabbath to his congregation, giving extensive details of his labours and usefulness, and amid deep and heartfelt expressions of sorrow, exhorting them to "remember the things which he spake while he was yet present with them." In most of the congregations of the body, as well as by ministers of other denominations, the event was referred to, with suitable expressions of admiration for his character and labours.

A monument was erected to his memory with the following inscription, composed by Doctor MacCulloch, of which copies may be seen framed in many houses, particularly on the East River.

AS A TRIBUTE

OF AFFECTIONATE REGARD FOR THE MEMORY OF THE LATE

JAMES MACGREGOR, D.D.,

The first Presbyterian minister of this district, who departed this life, March 3, 1830, in the 71st year of his age, and the 46th of his ministry, this tombstone was erected by a number of those who cherish a grateful remembrance of his apostolic zeal and labours of love.

When the early settlers of Pictou could afford to a minister of the gospel little else than a participation of their hardships, he cast in his lot with the destitute, became to them a pattern of patient endurance, and cheered them with the tidings of salvation. Like Him whom he served, he went about doing good. Neither toil nor privation deterred him from his Master's work, and the pleasure of the Lord prospered in his hand. He lived to witness the success of his labours in the erection of numer-

ous churches, and in the establishment of a Seminary, from which these churches could be provided with religious instructors. Though so highly honoured of the Lord, few have exceeded him in Christian humility; save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ he gloried in nothing; and as a public teacher, combining instruction with example, he approved himself to be a follower of them who through faith and patience now inherit the promises.

Doctor MacGregor was rather above the middle size, had a somewhat long visage, and dark complexion, was spare in flesh, and possessed an athletic active frame. No portrait of him is in existence.

It might be expected that we should now give some more particular delineation of his character. But our effort has been an entire failure, if this does not appear better in the facts which we have recorded, than in any description we could here give. All we could say might be comprehended in the eulogium of a gentleman, whom we have already named, a stranger, who came to reside on the East River, and who belonged to another denomination, that "he was the most like what he could imagine Christ to have been, of any man he had ever seen." A few testimonies borne to him, however, we have inserted in the Appendix, (See Appendix G.) Should we be accused of the partiality of the friend or the biographer, we dare aver before the Searcher of Hearts, that our aim has been to present him as he was, and we solemnly affirm, that we know not one fact to his discredit, which we have concealed.

We may, however, make a few remarks on his mental powers, as it will afford us an opportunity of referring to some points yet untouched. It has been remarked, that it is scarcely possible to find a person, who excels in the gifts of conversation, writing, and public speaking. Such is the division of natural gifts among the children of men, that it is not common to find an individual who occupies an eminent position in even two of these departments. The great writer is often no orator, and is

as frequently deficient in conversational powers; while the writings of the thorough orator may be unread, and the delightful companion of the social circle may fail to make any impression from a public platform. But we do claim for the subject of our memoir a high place in each of these departments. As to his conversational powers, we have had occasion so frequently to refer to them, that we do not feel it necessary to advert particularly to the subject again. This was one of the first features, which struck every person who met with him. And we may remark, that not only were the common people interested in his conversation, but the most cultivated minds were delighted with his society, and were often struck with the extent of his information, and the vigour and originality of his thoughts.

As a writer he had not much opportunity to distinguish himself. Engaged all his life in the most arduous labours, in circumstances the most unfavourable for literary pursuits, it would be no matter of surprise if he should not have added any thing to the permanent Theological Literature of his day. But the existing specimens of his writings afford abundant evidence, that he possessed strong powers of mind, capable of grappling with the most profound subjects of human investigations—clear reasoning powers—together with a somewhat poetical temperament, which lent a grace to his speculations, so that, had this been the sphere to which he devoted himself, he might have won for himself a high rank among Theological writers. In proof of this we need only refer to his defence of the Imprecations of the Psalms. Under any circumstances we would consider that treatise sufficient to establish his character as an original thinker, and a forcible writer. But when we consider, that it was written before he was thirty years of age, when he was entirely secluded from literary society, and even from all intercourse with men of education,—when he was engaged daily in most harassing toils—and when he had access to no books but the Bible, and the few old volumes he had brought with him from Scotland, we cannot help regarding it as a won-

derful production. He has there anticipated the latest investigations of modern criticism on the question, and we know of no work in the English language to the present day, in which the whole subject is discussed in a manner so exhaustive and so satisfactory.

His style is remarkably clear and simple, yet vigorous withal. We question if there will be found one unintelligible or confused sentence in all that he has written, while he often excels in condensing a large amount of meaning into a single phrase. These excellences of his style are doubtless owing in the first instance to the clearness and force of his conceptions, but in the next place to the fact that his language is generally the strong sturdy Saxon of Bunyan and the fathers of English Literature.

It should be remarked here, that the Gaelic was his native tongue. His family judge that he thought most in it, from the fact that if disturbed when engaged in thought, his first exclamation was usually in that language. Perhaps the quaintness of some of the expressions in his earlier compositions, is owing to this cause; but his later writings possess such accuracy of language and purity of idiom, that none would have supposed from them, that he had been trained in another tongue. We may remark here, that he had somewhat of a philological taste, which may account for his being so thoroughly master of both languages. Thus we find him not only well acquainted with the sacred languages, but importing at one time a Modern Greek Testament, at another a Welsh Bible, and we have heard of his studying some portions of the language of the Basque Provinces, and pronouncing it, in opposition to the judgment of many scholars, to be a dialect of the Celtic.

But the generation which knew him best will always consider that it was as a preacher that he exhibited the highest powers. His cotemporaries generally will always believe that, in this character, he was unrivalled in this part of the world. This opinion was entertained of him by all classes of society. "The common people heard him gladly," but the most cultivated

minds were scarcely less impressed under his preaching. Many of the facts recorded in the memoir, afford evidence of his power in public address. Of his sermons the great characteristics were plainness and simplicity. The truths of the gospel were stated in a manner level to the comprehension of a child. A clergyman recently deceased, informed us that he retained a distinct recollection of the course of thought in lectures, heard from him when he was eight years of age. The people were generally of humble attainments, and his illustrations of divine things were commonly taken from the most familiar objects. Sometimes he used strong and what might almost be termed rough expressions, but they were such as conveyed his meaning in a way that would not readily be forgotten. We give a single example. Describing the worthlessness and vileness of mankind by nature, he wound up by saying, that they were fit only to be "shovelled into hell."

In his manner, too, the great peculiarity was the absence of all art. There were none of the tricks of oratory. One great charm of all he said, was that it seemed to come so naturally from the heart. But there was all the earnestness and the complete absorption with his subject which marks the genuine orator. He had not much action, but as he warmed with his subject, his eye kindled with such brilliancy, that it seemed to pierce through each beholder, and his whole frame seemed instinct with emotion. And he had all the command over the feelings of his audience which marks the genuine orator. In preaching the law, or proclaiming the justice of God against sinners, he was sometimes terrific. As one described it, "You would think that the judgments of heaven were about to alight on you," or as another said, "He would almost make your hair stand on end." But his highest delight was to proclaim the gracious truths of the gospel, and on such themes as the love of God to sinners, or the sufferings of Christ, the tears coursed down his cheeks, though commonly he still retained firmness enough to proceed, a tremor of his voice, peculiarly affecting, marking the depth of his emotions. In his later years this

tenderness increased, so that he was sometimes so overcome, as to be unable for a little to proceed. At this period of life he seldom addressed a communion table without shedding tears.

In short, if he was not "the best minister that ever came to America," as we have repeatedly heard him termed, it would be useless to attempt to remove the idea from the minds of the first settlers of Pictou, and the early inhabitants of many other places in these Provinces. We have visited such on their dying beds, and when the faculties were so far gone, that they did not know their own children, we have seen the eye brighten at the mention of his name, and the soul awake to utter enthusiastic praises of him. In vain have we tried to reason with such, that the same divine grace which made him what he was could make others as good. With them there could be but one Doctor MacGregor, and as Foster said of Robert Hall, "while ready to give due honour to all valuable preachers, and knowing that the lights of religious instruction will still shine with useful lustre, and new ones continually rise, they involuntarily turn to look at the last fading colours in the distance where the greater luminary has set."

We have scarcely said any thing of him in the domestic circle, but it is scarcely necessary to do more than remark, that the light of his Christian example shone as brightly there as in any sphere of Christian life. Much of his time when at home was spent in study. Returning home from visiting, he sometimes scarcely took time to warm himself, till he sat down to his books or his writing. He was able to prosecute his studies undisturbed even by the presence of his family. His children remember that they might pursue their innocent sports without his seeming to heed them in the least, but the moment that any thing improper was said or done, he checked them with the rapidity of thought. But he was not so absorbed either in study or public work, as to neglect the moral and religious education of his children, and his faithfulness appears in the result. Trained up in the way they should go, not one of them has departed from it, and it would not be easy to convince the

members of that household, that any other family ever had so good a husband and father as they.

It will be proper to add some particular notice of the subsequent life and last days of her, who, for eighteen years, had been the Doctor's nearest and dearest associate on earth. We are happy, therefore, to insert the following, furnished by a member of the family :

"Though sorely stricken by this heavy blow, (viz., her husband's death,) she did not sink into despair, or refuse to be comforted. She rose in the strength of promised grace, and devoted herself to the care of her family. In the cottage where her husband had spent his last days, she dwelt in peace, reigning in the affections of the younger portion of the family who dwelt with her, and receiving many marks of undiminished regard from those of riper years, who were now gathering little families around their own hearth-stones. Pleasant days were these to which we revert with great delight, when the younger members of the family dwelt together, or were separated only for short seasons as circumstances rendered necessary. Gradually however, one after another was called in Providence to leave the parental roof tree. One removed to New Glasgow. Her second daughter was united in marriage to Rev. J. I. Baxter, of Onslow, and removed thither. Her third daughter, becoming the wife of Rev. J. Campbell, dwelt in St. Mary's. Her only son, the Rev. P. G. MacGregor, having been licensed in 1841 as a preacher, was settled during the same year in Guysboro, and in 1843 in Halifax. The marriage of her youngest daughter to Rev. J. Cameron, of Nine Mile River, involved the necessity of some change in domestic arrangements, and, among the many homes offered, she accepted of the invitation to accompany her youngest and last married daughter to her new home at Nine Mile River. Arriving there, after a rest of a few weeks in Onslow, she was surrounded with a people who were entire strangers, and removed far from the familiar faces and dear friends, with whom, for more than a quarter of a century, she had dwelt in peace and happiness. Yet her cheerfulness

and contentment were undiminished, even when visited with an affliction, calculated to subject them to a severe trial. Her hearing was slightly impaired by a cold taken about the time of her change of residence. Restored for a time, it was lost *almost entirely* through a return of cold in the head. She went to the house of God as in times past, and worshipped in spirit, but alas! the voice of the preacher and the psalm of praise were no longer audible. She could no longer hear or take part in ordinary conversation. Deeply she felt the loss sustained by the diminution of social intercourse, but more deeply the loss of the sanctuary services, which now appeared to have terminated for her on earth. Yet she never murmured, and never forsook the assemblies of Zion. She loved to be there, and in communion with the God of her youth enjoyed the blessedness of those who '*dwell* in the house of the Lord.' She now spent much of her time in retirement, and, unless present with the family, her employment appeared to consist chiefly of reading, meditation, and prayer. She marked the dispensation, and expressed her belief, that it was mercifully sent to withdraw her from the world, and to lead her into closer communion with God, preparatory to her appearance in his presence.

"Having paid a visit to her son in Halifax, this affliction was happily removed through the skill and kindness of Doctor Parker, and as the familiar sounds of human voices were again clearly heard, in the tones of ordinary conversation, tears of gratitude flowed down her cheeks in copious streams, and special thanks were given to God, that she again could hear the glad tidings of salvation, and join with the multitude who kept holyday in songs of praise to her Covenant God and Redeemer.

"The times of the dispensation of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper at Nine Mile River, were to her occasions of great interest, especially when her son assisted the Rev. Mr. Cameron, whom she also loved as a son. She remained throughout the whole services, and on one such occasion in winter accompanied them to a distant section of the congregation, to be present, as-

signing as a reason that she could not have many more of these precious seasons, and must improve those within her reach.

"In June, 1851, she determined to revisit the scenes and the friends of former years. Coming first to Onslow, about the middle of June, she spent a week or ten days with Mrs. Baxter; all the other members of the family she was to meet in New Glasgow. These were days of great enjoyment to mother and daughter. She received and returned visits of friendship, was present at religious ordinances, both in Onslow and Truro, and no indications were visible to the most observant that her race was so nearly run. She accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Cameron on their way to the meeting of Synod, and on the evening of Wednesday, the 25th of June, her eldest daughter, Mrs. James Fraser, of New Glasgow, had the satisfaction of receiving her, apparently in her usual state of health, to spend some weeks together. How delusive are human expectations! She was to watch over her in her sickness, to close her eyes in death, and then having for a short season proved herself not only a sister but a mother to the younger members of the family, to hear the Master's call, and to *go also* at his summons.

"On Thursday her children and grand-children gathered around her. Other dear friends called,—not to pay visits of form, but to give expression to their feelings of affectionate regard. The two following days (Friday and Saturday) were spent chiefly in returning these visits, and in affectionate intercourse with many who loved her for her own virtues and graces, and who were reminded by her presence of the worth and services of one over whom the grave had now closed for more than twenty years. The exertion and mental excitement of these days were probably too much for her feeble frame, but no injurious effects were yet visible.

"On the Saturday afternoon and evening several ministers coming up from Synod called, which prolonged the strain upon her nervous system. On the Lord's day, however, she was where she ever delighted to be,—waiting on God in the ordinances of his grace. She worshipped in Primitive Church.

Rev. Mr. Baxter preached in the morning, his text being Psalm cxliv. 15, 'Happy is that people whose God is the Lord.' Rev. P. G. MacGregor preached in the afternoon from 1 Sam. ii. 30, 'Them that honour me I will honour.' She felt it good to be there. She expressed the satisfaction which the services yielded her, and her determination to hear the Rev. Mr. Sedgewick, in the evening, giving as a reason that she might never have another opportunity of hearing him. Her son, on whose arm she had leaned in going to, and returning from, the house of God, perceiving that the exertion of the previous days and the strain of two long services had produced some measure of exhaustion, advised her to rest at home during the evening, reminding her of the duty of guarding against over-exertion. She yielded to advice. On the morrow, however, she was indisposed, whether from over-exertion or from cold, taken from a current of air in the church, none could tell. On Tuesday she continued poorly, but revived somewhat on Wednesday, so that on Thursday morning, Mr. and Mrs. Cameron felt free to return home, and her son to visit friends at Guysborough and St. Mary's. On his return to New Glasgow on the morning of the following Thursday, having had no intelligence of any relapse, he found that she had passed from earth a few hours previous.

"For several days she had been visibly sinking, but as her strength had frequently been much prostrated by severe colds, no serious alarm was taken till death was at hand. All that filial love and medical skill could do was done. Doctor Forrest, then the resident physician in New Glasgow, attended her; while she was watched over, by one of the most loving of daughters as well as by her family. Not a few of her sayings during those days and nights are treasured up in their hearts. To the late Mrs. Carmichael, a much loved friend of many years' standing, she said, 'I think it probable, that I have been brought back to die among you.' To another she said that when she placed her foot on the waggon-step at Nine Mile River, she thought she might never return, and took a farewell look of the

neat cottage, where she had spent two happy years of her life.

"She refused to have persons sitting with her by night, remarking that she was never lonely. On one of these occasions, awaking from sleep, and referring evidently to her dreams, she said to her daughter on her entering her room, 'I am always seeing those old men.' 'What old men, mother?' was her daughter's inquiry. She replied, "The old men who used to follow father, (*i. e.* her husband,) when he went to the Upper Settlement and other places to preach.' Doubtless, she was soon to join with many of those old men in singing the *new song* before the throne.

"On Wednesday the Rev. Messrs. Herdman, Roy, and Walker called on her, and each spent some time with her in religious conversation and prayer. Toward evening she inquired if her son might be expected on that evening, and learning that his arrival was not probable; she remarked that she had been highly privileged on that day, that she had enjoyed the prayers of three ministers, adding, but if Peter were to come to-night, he would be the fourth.

"During the night she slept. Early on Thursday she asked to be helped to rise, and sit upon an arm-chair. She appeared faint and requested that the window should be raised.—'Twas done. Her head dropped on the chair, and in a few moments she breathed her last, having passed away without a moan or a struggle; her countenance in death, wearing the same placid and sweet expression, by which in life it had ever been distinguished.

"On the 12th, devout men carried her body to the grave. Though this was done with many tears and with heartfelt sorrow, yet they did not make great lamentation over her. Those who had lost a mother knew that she had been called home. They knew that she had oft directed them to the Lord Jesus, to teach them how to live and how to die; and now that she was released from the trials of earth, they felt persuaded that her absence from the body was presence with the Lord.

"She left behind her no enemy. Her mental powers were not above mediocrity. She was remarkable, rather for the sweetness of her disposition, for the consistency of her Christian walk, and the ardour of her devotional feelings. She loved divine truth, and her own New Testament, in large print, bore the marks of a book which had been carefully read. She taught her children to fear and to love God. She prayed for them, and with them. In the absence of others to conduct family worship, the household were not left to go forth to the world without meeting together at the throne of the heavenly grace. With reverence and fervour, strongly indicated in the tones of her voice, the sound of which the writer will never forget, she pled with the God of all the families of the earth, her covenant God, who had led her in youth, and through life, to guard and guide *them* through all dangers on earth, to lead them to Jesus, and to fit them for his everlasting kingdom in glory.

"Her trust in Providence never failed. She rose under difficulties. Committing herself to God in prayer and using diligently appointed means, she rested with confidence on the divine promises. Her calmness was seldom disturbed. She dwelt under the shadow of the wings of Him that is the Almighty. Thus living, her end was peace. Having served her generation, she fell asleep."

Doctor MacGregor had eleven children born to him. Of these, two died when but a few days old. The remaining nine, viz., three sons and three daughters by his first marriage; and one son and two daughters by his second,—survived him. All are still living, with the exception of one daughter, the author's mother, who finished her earthly career in 1843, having lived a life of unobtrusive usefulness, and died in the triumphs of faith.

They all filled stations of usefulness and respectability, in society as well as in the church. They were all married, and all had families; and the promise is now being realized, "My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the

Lord, from henceforth and for ever." His eldest grand-son has been permitted to raise this monument to his memory, and of his other grand-children, the majority of those who have reached years of maturity, are now members of the church, and there has not yet been one black sheep in all the flock. May we have the reader's prayers that no one of his descendants be either filled with spiritual pride, saying, "We have Abraham to our father," or increase his condemnation by despising the exalted privileges with which we have been favoured, but that we may be "mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations."

APPENDIX.

Appendix A.

PETITION FROM PICTOU.

To the Reverend, the Moderator and remanent members of the Presbytery of ———, *to meet at* ———.

The Representation and Petition of us a Committee appointed by the inhabitants of Pictou in the Province of Nova Scotia, for obtaining a minister of the Everlasting Gospel,—Humbly shewing:

That, for nigh twenty years past since the first settlers came to Pictou, they have laboured under a variety of hardships and difficulties, which it would be needless here to mention; but which our Commissioners, Messrs. John Buchanan, Senr. and John Pagan, are pretty well acquainted with. What has been most affecting to us was the want of the Gospel and ordinances thereof dispensed among us during that time. For though the Philadelphia Company made provision for, and sent a minister, viz., the Rev. James Lyon, at the first Settlement, yet he did not continue among us, which very much discouraged the people, and was exceedingly detrimental to the settling of the place; and though we have had several visits of the Rev. Daniel Cock, of Truro, and David Smith, of Londonderry, in our neighbourhood from time to time, yet many, very many silent Sabbaths have passed over our heads to our very great grief, and the great prejudice of the interest of religion, especially with respect to a numerous young generation, for want of the ordinary means of grace and salvation; and though the settlement of the place has met with a variety of discouragements, and back-sets in Holy Providence, yet our number within these few years by past is very considerably increased, and is daily increasing, and a very promising prospect of yet a far greater increase, occasioned by the happy peace between Great Britain and the States of North America.

We have agreed to pay to the minister settled among us, in the meantime £80 per annum, for the first and second year; £90 per annum, for the third and fourth year, and thereafter £100 currency, that is £90 sterling, annually,—one-half thereof in cash and the other in produce; and if Providence smile upon the Settlement and our industry, we hope soon to be able to make some addition to that sum. Besides we have agreed to build a house and barn for the minister, and that he shall have a glebe Lot of land. And, also that we shall clear so much of it from time to time for his encouragement, &c. As to farther information that the members may require, our Commissioners can satisfy them.

We would, therefore earnestly request the Presbytery, in the bowels of

our Lord Jesus Christ, the alone King and Head of the Church, and for his sake,—for the advancement of his kingdom, and for the salvation of precious perishing souls in this wilderness—that you may take every proper step which your wisdom may point forth unto you, agreeable to the sacred oracles, to send us with all convenient speed a minister to labour in word and doctrine amongst us—as also for strengthening the hands of the few ministers of the Presbyterian denomination already here—and for some farther supply of several other vacant congregations and desolate corners in the Province—who are as sheep without a shepherd as well as ourselves, and who are frequently asking for supply, but can obtain very little, though they may happily be encouraged, if we succeed, to take more vigorous measures to obtain ministers.

That he who has the stars of the Churches in his right hand may direct you to a proper object, and put it in his heart to come over to our Macedonia for our help; that the Breaker may go before you and be a spirit of judgment unto you when sitting in judgment, and with his eye set upon you to give you all that counsel and direction that may be necessary in this and every other matter that may come before you, for the glory of his great name and the advancement of his interest and kingdom, is the sincere prayer of us the Committee aforesaid.—Subscribed by us for ourselves and brethren at Pictou, this eighth day of November, 1784.

[Signed] Robert Patterson,
John Patterson,
Robert Marshall,
William Smith,
Donald MacKay.

Appendix B.

PETITION TO THE PRESBYTERY OF PERTH.

At Greenock, *9th March*, 1786.

To the Reverend, the Moderator and remanent members of the Associate Presbytery of Perth, to meet at Perth the 14th of this month.

The Representation and Petition of the subscriber, Commissioner for the inhabitants of Pictou, Province of Nova Scotia,—Humbly sheweth:

That the inhabitants of Pictou, emigrants from Scotland, though willing and able to support the Gospel, are in a destitute condition, through the want of Gospel ordinances dispensed among them, as the copy of the petition of their Committee hereto prefixed more fully narrates.

That it is necessary that the minister who shall be missioned to them be qualified to preach in the English and Gaelic languages, as many of the people are from the Highlands of Scotland.

That your petitioner has full power to apply to any Presbytery or other Presbyterian Court, for having a Gospel minister regularly missioned to them.

That, besides the stipend promised by the people, your petitioner is authorized to advance from £30 to £40 Sterling for passage, cabin-stores, and other incident charges that may be necessary.

That sundry who have the Gaelic language have offered themselves but as he is well informed of Mr. James Drummond MacGregor, Probationer, under the inspection of the Reverend Presbytery of Perth, being qualified for preaching in the Gaelic language, and that he is one who is honest and faithful in adhering to the doctrines of the Westminster Confession, and the system of Presbyterial government as maintained by the Church of Scotland, in her purest times; he therefore wishes to apply to the courts of the Secession, that they may mission him, and in so doing he thinks he does a real service to that people, and that he does his best to fulfil his commission.

That he has no reason to suspect one from the Secession will be disagreeable to them. They have received with pleasure some from the other Synod; he believes the people will be ready to receive the gospel from him as their minister, and though it will require time and much labour for instructing that people, he hopes Mr. MacGregor will find much comfort in bringing them forward to know the way of God more perfectly.

May it therefore please this Reverend Presbytery to mission the said Mr. Jas. Drummond MacGregor to Pictou, Nova Scotia, that he may labour among that people, agreeable to their petition, taking all due steps towards this, that he may be ordained and sent off in the course of next summer.

Or if this Reverend Presbytery shall not judge it competent for them to send Mr. MacGregor as a missionary, or shall think it reasonable the superior court should, if Mr. MacGregor, who has been brought forward to the ministry with a particular view to the preaching of Gaelic in Scotland can be spared from his native country to preach the same language to his countrymen in America. May it then please this Reverend Presbytery to refer the whole cause to the Reverend, the Associate Synod at their next meeting, and to require Mr. MacGregor's attendance at said meeting, if they shall grant a reference or transmission of this petition, so as this mission be not delayed till the season of getting a passage would be lost.

And the petitioner engages to communicate whatever information as to particulars the Presbytery may require, or that they may judge proper Mr. MacGregor be informed of, as to this important cause as to himself and that people.

And begs the Reverend Presbytery will excuse his absence on account of the distance and his advanced years, and that the other Commissioner does not subscribe, he being from home, and the Petitioner not willing to lose the opportunity of presenting this petition at your first meeting.

That the Great Shepherd may direct you in this and all other matters coming before you, is the sincere desire of

Your humble Petitioner,

[Signed,] John Pagan.

These certify that Mr. John Pagan, the subscriber of the above petition, is of a respectable character for a number of years. He was an Elder of the Rev. Dr. John Gillies's Session at Glasgow. Since his coming from Glasgow to reside here, he has occasionally officiated in one of the Parishes of Greenock. And (he) farther testifies that the copy of the petition from Pictou on the first and second pages of this sheet is a true copy, I having carefully compared it with the original petition. Attested at Greenock, this ninth day of March, one thousand seven hundred and eighty six years.

[Signed,] John Buist, *Minister.*

Appendix C.

EXTRACT OF THE ORDINATION OF MR. JAS. DRUMMOND MACGREGOR ON A MISSION TO PICTOU, PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA, NORTH AMERICA.

At Glasgow, 30*th May*, 1786.

Which day and place the Associate Presbytery of Glasgow met, being constitute with prayer, by the Rev. Mr. James Taylor, Moderator, *pro tempore*. Present, Messrs. John Jameson, James Alice, John Buist. William Jameson. Andrew Mitchell, David Somervail, James Ramsay, James Greig, Andrew Thomson, James Punton, James Robertson, and James Graham, Ministers; with John Blair from Glasgow, William Allan, from Paisley, and James Hart, from Hamilton, Ruling Elders.

There was given in the following extract from the Associate Synod, viz., "Minute of the Associate Synod, respecting the mission of Mr. Drummond MacGregor to Nova Scotia.—Edinburgh, 4th May 1786.

"There was transmitted by the Committee of Bills, and read. a reference from the Presbytery of Perth, of a petition subscribed by Mr. John Pagan, as a commissioner empowered by some people settled in Pictou. in the Province of Nova Scotia. to obtain a minister for them to preach the Gospel among them, in which some brethren represented that Mr. John Buchanan, the other Commissioner. concurred, though he had not subscribed it through being absent at that time,—craving the appointment of Mr. James Drummond MacGregor, on a mission for that purpose, as, understanding that he was capable of preaching in the Gaelic as well as the English language, for which there was a necessity at that place: also, of a petition subscribed by five members of a Committee of the inhabitants of Pictou, viz., Messrs. Robert Patterson, John Patterson, Robert Marshall, William Smith, and Donald MacKay, transmitted by them to Messrs. Jonn Buchanan and John Pagan, craving that a minister might be sent over to preach the Gospel to them, promising a sum of money therein specified yearly for his subsistence. Both these petitions were read,—a considerable time was then spent in conversation together, and with Mr. MacGregor on the subject, and the question was agreed to be put: Grant the said petition and appoint Mr. MacGregor accordingly. After prayer for the Lord's countenance in the matter, the roll being called and votes marked, it carried unanimously, grant and appoint, like as the Synod did, and hereby do appoint Mr. James Drummond MacGregor, on the said mission accordingly. They excused Mr. MacGregor from all appointments he is lying under in the Presbytery of Perth, except the ensuing Sabbath, transmitted him to the Presbytery of Glasgow, appointed him to deliver a lecture on Matt. xxviii. 19, 20 verses, a popular sermon on the last clause of verse 20, an Exegesis on the following question, viz.,—*An Christus sit Deus*, to give account of the first half of the first century of Church History; to read the first Psalm in Hebrew, and the Greek Testament *ad aperturam libri*, before the said Presbytery, against the last Tuesday of this month at Glasgow; at which time the Synod appointed the Presbytery of Glasgow to hold their next ordinary meeting, and they appointed that on the Presbytery being satisfied with Mr. MacGregor's trials, they take the first opportunity to ordain him to the office of the holy ministry, and that

Mr. MacGregor take the first opportunity afterwards of setting off for Pictou, in Nova Scotia, to exercise his ministry among that people, upon which Mr. Buist in name of the Commissioners took instruments in the clerk's hands and craved extracts."—(Extracted.)

[Signed,] Jas. Morison, *Synod Clerk.*

Mr. James Drummond MacGregor delivered his Lecture and Popular Sermon from the subjects assigned him, which the Presbytery sustained as part of trials for ordination.

Eodem die et loco, Hora 2da, P. M., Sederunt ut supra. Proceeded to take Mr. MacGregor's private trials. He delivered his Exegesis, defended his Thesis, read the first Psalm in Hebrew, the Greek Testament *ad aperturam libri*, gave an account of the first half of the first century of Church History, answered extempore questions. The question was put, Approve of the trials delivered in view of ordination *in cumulo* or not, the roll called and votes marked; it carried unanimously,—approved.

It was reported that a vessel is expected to sail this week for Halifax, and no other opportunity expected this season, therefore moved that the Presbytery shall proceed to the ordination, to-morrow. The question was put,—Proceed to the ordination or not; a brother being engaged in prayer, the roll called and votes marked, it carried,—proceed to the ordination. Appointed Mr. Robertson to preside in the ordination, Mr. Graham to begin with prayer, Mr. James Greig to preach after the ordination in the Session House, at Glasgow, 31st of May, 1786.

Which day and place the Associate Presbytery of Glasgow met, being constitute with prayer, by Mr. James Robertson, Moderator. Present, Messrs. John Jameson, James Alice, John Buist, William Jameson, Andrew Mitchell, David Somervail, James Ramsay, James Greig, James Punton, James Taylor, and James Graham, Ministers; with John Blair, from Glasgow, William Allan, from Paisley, and Thos. Hart, from Hamilton, Ruling Elders.

The Rev. Mr. John Stewart, a member of the Presbytery of Stirling, being present, took his seat.

By order of the Presbytery, Andrew Alison served the Edict, calling thrice publicly any who had any thing to object against the doctrine, life, or conversation of Mr. James Drummond MacGregor, why he may not be ordained, that they compear before the Presbytery, to give in their objections, or, that the Presbytery would proceed immediately to the ordination. He having returned the Edict, the Presbytery went to the church.* The Moderator preached a sermon from Isaiah, chap. 60, verse 9. After sermon, and account given of the Mission of Mr. MacGregor, the questions usually put to ministers at their ordination, and a question as to his accepting of and closing with this mission, and his performing Ministerial duties to the people at Pictou, were put to Mr. MacGregor, and he having answered them to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, after praise, the Presbytery with prayer and imposition of hands, did solemnly ordain Mr. James Drummond MacGregor to the office of the holy ministry, on a mission to Pictou, in Nova Scotia. Thereafter the right hand of fellowship was given him by the brethren of the Presbytery, and the Moderator having addressed him in some exhortations, the public work was concluded, with a sermon by Mr. James Greig, from Acts, chap. 26, verse 17, and first clause of the 18th verse. The Presbytery having returned to the Session House, Mr. MacGregor declared his willingness to subscribe his an-

* Mr. Graham began with praise and prayer.

swers to the questions put to him when required, and took his seat in Presbytery.

Mr. Thomson, the clerk, having gone home to the fast in his congregation, before the sacrament; the Presbytery directed Mr. Buist, their clerk, *pro tempore*, to extract the minute of Mr. MacGregor's ordination, to be sent along with him.

This and three preceding pages, having a marginal note on the third page, extracted by

John Buist, *Presbytery Clerk, pro tem.*

Appendix D.

The following is a copy of a document on record in the Registry Office in Pictou.

"Know all men by these presents that I, Archibald Allardice, of the Province of Nova Scotia, mariner, for and in consideration of the sum of forty pounds currency to me in hand paid by Dr. John Harris, of Truro, have made over, and sold, and bargained, and by these presents do bargain, make over, and sell to the aforesaid Doctor John Harris, *one negro man named Sambo, aged twenty-five years or thereabouts, and also one brown mare, and her colt now sucking.* To have and to hold *the said negro man and mare with her colt, as his property*, for and in security of the above sum of money until paid with lawful interest. And at the payment of the above mentioned sum with interest and expenses, the aforesaid Doctor John Harris is by these presents firmly bound to deliver up to the aforesaid Archibald Allardice, the said negro man, named Sambo, with the mare and colt (casualties excepted). But if the said negro man, mare, or colt, should die before the said money should be paid, then in such proportion, I, the said Archibald Allardice, promise to make good the deficiency to the said Doctor John Harris. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this tenth day of August, in the year of our Lord, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-six, and in the twenty-sixth of our Sovereign Lord, George the Third's, Reign.

Archibald Allardice, L. S.

Signed, sealed, and delivered in presence of
James Phillips,
Robert Dunn.

Truro, August 26th, 1786, Recorded on the oath of James Phillips.
John Harris, D. R.

Along the margin the following words were written. "Assignment to Thomas Harris, 20th day of April, 1791."

per John Harris, D. R.

Appendix E.

Address of the Ministers of the Associate Presbytery of Nova Scotia, to the General Associate Synod.

Pictou, *Feb.* 5, 1799.

Rev. Fathers and Brethren—Moved, we hope, with zeal for the glory of God, and concern for the salvation of our fellow creatures, we beg leave to intreat you in behalf of the people of this country, and to second by our influence with you, the applications made to you from several congregations here, that you would send to them ministers of the gospel to feed their souls. They have great need of gospel ministers. There are many people in this and the neighbouring Provinces, who are now and have, for a long time, been without the gospel. Many of the young generation have never heard its joyful sound. There are many infant settlements so weak, that they cannot support a fixed dispensation thereof, who earnestly desire occasional supplies; many others are able and willing, but all their endeavours to obtain it have hitherto been in vain. You have some young men under your inspection, who might come over and preach to some of these people; and sure it is their duty to come. It is a most grievous thing to think of their perishing for lack of knowledge, while there is a possibility of giving them the means of knowledge, every one ought to pity and help them to the utmost. We do what we can, but our labours cannot be much felt in such an extensive circle. There is a necessity for more hands to be employed in the work. The work is the most honourable, pleasant, and profitable, in which any one can be employed; and it is astonishing that any who are called to it, should not engage in it with some degree of the zeal of the great apostle of the Gentiles, and disregard every difficulty and opposition in the way. What should ministers fear in the work of Christ? How grievous then is it, that there is a necessity of pressing them to it by all sorts of arguments, and that all will not do!

This is an age in which there appears a great deal of zeal for the propagation of the gospel among the Heathen. An equal zeal for its propagation among those who have little or nothing of Christianity but the name, is no less necessary, and the work is far less arduous. Those who have never heard of the name of Jesus, are not the only people who have need of hearing the gospel. There are many people here who have heard of Christ, who have Bibles, and who have sometimes heard the gospel preached, who yet may be said to be in a perishing situation for want of the means of grace, and whose case calls as loud for help as that of the heathens. It is as really duty to provide for those as these. Many publications have appeared of late in various forms, urging by every imaginable argument the duty of ministers to go to the heathen. Though we cannot plead the cause of the people here so eloquently as they, nor make use of language so affecting, yet we beg leave to say, that there is no argument in these publications which will not conclude in their favour with equal propriety. We beg you therefore to think of them when you read these publications, and we earnestly wish the young men preparing for the ministry to do so.

But there are some things more favourable in the case of the people here than in that of the heathen, at least in the estimate of flesh and blood; and were not these counted upon, there would be no need of this address. Surely it is not such a hardship for ministers to go to the nearest parts of America, not beyond our own dominions, to a civilized country, where they have countrymen and friends before them, and to a people sensible of their need of ministers, and earnestly desirous of them, as it is to go a long voyage (to the Pacific Ocean, for example), far beyond the British dominions, to an unknown country, and to a people uncivilized and insensible of the value of ministers. If there are men found willing to go through these greater hardships, we hope there will not be wanting some willing to go through the less; though with heart-felt sorrow we have long observed their backwardness.

It is about ten years since the people of Amherst sent you a petition for a minister. The subscribers were not numerous, but they were mostly men of sense and piety. It was the superior confidence they placed in you, that induced them to apply to you; and every year since they expected an answer, though their hopes grew fainter the longer they waited. They gave a call to Mr. Brown very soon after his arrival in this Province; and had he been left to his own choice, there is little reason to doubt that he would have preferred them to the people among whom the Presbytery appointed him, though he was not dissatisfied with their appointment. Delay and disappointment discouraged them, several of them sold their possessions, and removed to other places of the Province, and to the United States, where they could find the gospel. Others are removed by death; so that few of the subscribers are now in Amherst. Those who have come in their places, especially the young generation, having little acquaintance with gospel doctrines, and being hopeless of any relief from you, have now bargained with a minister whom chance threw in their way, and of which they may repent ere long. Amherst is grown to be a populous place, and had you sent a minister to it, it might now have been a flourishing congregation; whereas it has been ten years without the gospel, after applying to you for it, and they are perhaps badly provided for at last. To other places who observe the bad success of Amherst, what a great discouragement is this!

About seven years ago, the people of Princetown, and Stanhope, and St. Peter's in the island of St. John, applied to you for two ministers, and they have waited ever since with patience (or rather impatience), frequently inquiring if there was any hope of a speedy answer to their petitions. For a number of years we returned for answer, that ministers might soon be expected; but we are ashamed to give them that answer any longer, and now we know not what to say. That people stand in need of the gospel almost as much as any people on the face of the earth; for beside all other considerations, their being in an island prevents them from having so ready access to other means of knowledge as if they were on the continent; and they are surrounded with Papists, who have always one or more priests among them, who use all their dexterity in making converts, especially among the young generation. There are in the island of St. John, eight or ten other settlements that would require supply of sermon, being yet so weak, that they cannot support ministers for themselves. It is a great trial of patience, to wait seven years for a minister, and to have an opportunity of hearing the gospel for two or three Sabbaths only during all that time. There are good Christians in the island of St. John, who, in all probability, have not heard five sermons these twenty-five years; and probably there are some there twenty-five years

old who never heard a sermon! Who would not compassionate this people? We hope two ministers would be very agreeably situated among them, and in a short time there would be a demand for a number more. We earnestly beseech the Synod to consider the case of this island, and to send over two ministers to them as soon as possible.

The people of Douglas, in this Province, were the next to petition you for a minister. This congregation is very forward and eager to obtain the gospel, but withal impatient of delay; so that there is danger, as they are not sufficiently aware of the evil of error, that they will not wait so long as you would wish or expect, but, being wearied out, will apply to some other quarter for that help which they will give over hoping for from you. A part of this congregation have an opportunity of hearing Mr. Brown occasionally, as there is but a few miles of water between them and his congregation; but this seems only to make them more eager to have a minister of their own. There is therefore special need for the Synod to consider the case of this people, and grant their petition. Though the people of Mirimichi, in New Brunswick, be last in their application, yet they themselves consider their case as so deplorable above others, especially on account of the breaking dispensations they have met with, that they are entitled to be first answered. And indeed it is hard to deny their claim.

It is difficult to say which of these four places is most in need. But if the Synod cannot supply them all at once, let some of them be supplied, and the rest as soon after as possible, if they shall wait.

The people of Cape Breton petitioned the Session of Pictou, before our erection into a Presbytery, to appoint their minister to pay them a visit to preach the gospel to them, and to give them advice and direction how to obtain a minister for themselves. The petition was granted, but the visit could not be paid till August last; partly because so few of them were desirous of the gospel, (the generality being lukewarm), that they could scarcely support it; and partly because there was no hope of getting their petition granted for a long time, through the backwardness of ministers to come out; and because so many other places were entitled to be supplied before them, they were advised to delay sending home their petition for some time. But had they a minister, there is no reason to doubt that he would soon form a congregation; for the gospel would be a new thing to them, and, through the divine blessing, would run as it did among the Gentiles at first. Were there a minister there, application would soon be made to him from Newfoundland, and other places. In all appearance, nothing but the want of ministers prevents the gospel from spreading rapidly through this Province, New Brunswick, part of both the Canadas, island St. John, Cape Breton, Newfoundland, &c. Had ministers been forward to come to our assistance since the first of us arrived here, the gospel would have been already spread considerably through these countries.

We wish the Synod to advert to the growing population of this country. Places that were not capable to maintain the gospel a few years ago, are now able; places that are not now able, will be so soon. Pictou is now more capable to maintain four ministers, than they were to maintain one when they sent their first petition to you. It may be a presbytery instead of a congregation, before the present generation be gone. There is within twenty miles of Pictou, a new settlement almost capable to maintain a minister, where, fifteen years ago, there was not a single inhabitant. The country in general peoples fast; for it is not uncommon to see eight or ten children in a family grown up to be heads of families themselves;

for the case is not here as at home, that the greater part die in infancy. Besides, in times of peace, there are great accessions from other places. Hence you may see the importance of planting congregations in this country, and that there will always be an increasing demand for ministers.

If the Synod thinks that more money should have been sent home to pay for their passage, we answer, We have not the face to bid the people advance more money; for as matters stand at present, it would look like as if we were asking it for ourselves. Douglas advanced money. Fraser, Thom, and Co., respectable merchants in Mirimichi, promised to write to Hunter and Co., Greenock, to answer the order of the Rev. James Robertson, Kilmarnock, for the passage of the minister to that place; and we suppose he has performed it, or, if not, it will be done before the passage be long due. None of us have been in the island of St. John these four years past, and we know not the present sentiments of the people there, save only that they are still waiting for the ministers; but when they wrote the petitions, they laid their account with paying the passage of the ministers. Besides, Lord Montgomery's agent there had then power (and we suppose has it still) to pay the passage of the first Presbyterian minister who should come to the island. Could we give people some assurance of getting a minister the first or second year after sending home their petition, they could easily be prevailed upon to collect the money beforehand; but they cannot be much to blame for a backwardness, while their prospect of an answer is so distant and uncertain.

We apprehend there is more need than you or we have been aware of, for fervent addresses to the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers to his harvest. The sending forth of ministers is a matter of the greatest importance, and demands much prayer. Our blessed Master, previous to his sending forth the apostles, both exhorted his disciples to pray to the Lord of the harvest, and continued himself all night in prayer to God. We doubt not but we have more need to stir up ourselves and our people, than you and your people, to this duty. Yet the more that you and the people under your charge abound in this duty, the sooner may we expect the answer of our suit. Perhaps it might not be improper for the Synod to cause an address to be drawn up, and circulated among the preachers under their inspection, calculated to impress upon their consciences the obligation they are under to obey calls from foreign parts, especially such calls as have been lying a number of years before the Synod unanswered. But this we leave to the wisdom of the Synod. We beseech you to exert yourselves in behalf of the people here. And we pray the Great Shepherd of the sheep to prosper all your efforts for his glory and the good of the Church.

James MacGregor
Duncan Ross,
John Brown.

Appendix F.

HISTORY OF ST. JAMES.

(*From the Colonial Presbyterian.*)

On the 16th May, 1803, we bade adieu to all that was dear to us in Assynt and Edcrachilis,—two parishes in Sutherlandshire, Scotland. We sailed for Wilmington, North Carolina, with clear sky and fair wind, which soon made the land of birth look small to us. The godly Niel Morrison, whose praise was in the churches at home, being one of us, before sunset, called the passengers below to worship God. We sung a portion of the 45th psalm:

O daughter, hearken and regard,
And do thine ear incline;
Likewise forget thy father's house
And people that are thine.

Then read a chapter and prayed: this practice was continued invariably during a passage of twelve weeks. The different heads of families prayed in their turn. Every Sabbath a sermon was read on deck. Beating against head winds on half allowance, we were at last getting tired—spoke a ship and learned that the yellow fever was raging in New York and Southern States. We protested against going any farther South, and arrived in Boston 16th of August. The wharf was thronged by gentlemen and ladies from morning till night, eager to employ the young of both sexes. Men with families were kindly treated by gentlemen looking out dwellings for them. Five families went to Carolina, expecting their friends there would help them, but found them no more than able to help themselves. The rest heard of a large tract of land in Kennebeck, State of Maine. They embarked for Thomaston, but on arrival found terms did not suit. Had to winter there, being late in the season. Being informed of vacant crown land on the Schoodic river, they embarked in Spring and soon found themselves once more on British ground. At that time no land was thought worth accepting save hard-wood land, and as they were determined if possible to settle together, a sufficient quantity of land could not be found nearer than the Chiputneticook Ridges. The land was examined by the assistance of a guide and pleased well, but on returning from it, it was ascertained that there were three claimants for it. Sadly disappointed and bordering on despair, they were told of a large tract of land back of Digby, N. S. Embarked for Digby—making the third passage since landing in Boston. Again they were disappointed; the land was taken up in blocks by rich men, and with their purses empty they could not locate themselves together in that place. Three families settled at Bread Cove. The rest were faint yet pursuing. They paused at Annapolis Bay, not knowing what was in the wheel of Providence for them. Most of the men of wealth in St. Andrews were Scotch. When they heard of the immigrants' departure from N. B. they were very angry; hired a schooner and sent her after them at their own expense, and brought them back to St. Stephen. They built quite a little village of log houses on the bank of the river until they could do better. A remonstrance accompanied by Petition, was sent to Fredericton. No decisive answer had been given to the Petition until the House of Assembly met. The late

Ninian Lindsay, Esq., was one of the members from Charlotte at that time. Arriving in Fredericton his first push was towards Government House, and laying the case plainly before the Governor, he said the immigrants must have the land petitioned for. There were three claimants to the land. The late Joseph Porter was one of them, and his first act of kindness to the settlers was the surrender of his claim for their sakes. The others adhered to the claim. However, the late Donald MacDonald, Esq., being a real Highlander, a Lawyer, and a Crown Land Surveyor, obtained an order of survey. Heading his Highland crew to the spot, he built a camp outside of Mark's grant. The two claimants appeared and forbade his proceeding any further. He told them to mind their own business, and he would mind his. He had his orders and he would execute them. The survey was made, and lots cast who should be served first. They then proceeded with the distribution. In laying out the Scotch Ridge a quantity of 200 acres was allowed to husband and wife, and 50 acres for every child. The late Benjamin Pomroy, who had four sons married, and two sons in law, natives, obtained an order of survey on a ridge one mile West of it—the present Pomroy Ridge. The immigrants wrote to their friends who stayed behind, (in the States and Nova Scotia,) how they fared at last. This intelligence brought them along, and they got land on the Basswood Ridge, two miles East, and on the Little Ridge, three miles West, bounded by the St. Croix. But then they were discontented as they could not be together. Three miles through thick woods was too great a distance to admit of their being neighbours, and so the men of the Scotch Ridge changed with them one hundred acres on the Scotch Ridge for one hundred acres on the Little Ridge. Now they were happy. They then spotted a line of road, shunning every swamp, cutting under-brush only; built a large camp to eat and sleep together until each would have a spot clear to build a house and plant potatoes. They worked together in crews, doing equal justice to each individual. One week they worked at St. Stephen and Calais, earning supplies for the following one. Having obtained these they would start on Monday morning with their heavy packs carrying them full 12 miles. They continued this plan during the Fall of 1804, and Spring and Summer of 1805. It was at this time that the late Joseph Porter and Colin Campbell, Esqrs., endeared themselves to the immigrants by many acts of kindness. They both had stores, and whatever the settlers wanted they could have for labour, or otherwise whenever they got able. And seldom would they employ any other than the immigrants. In the Fall of 1805 they moved into the wilderness, carrying their children on their backs, and their various necessaries, such as they had, in the same way as they had long done. They found an excellent crop of their own planting for digging. But they could not forget that the Israelites were guided in the wilderness by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, so when the Sabbath came they all met in one house. The master of the house commenced the worship of God by singing, reading a chapter and prayer. Then sung and read a sermon; and concluded by singing and prayer by one of the hearers. Then they agreed to keep one day in a fortnight as a question day. These questions would be similar to the following. After singing, reading a chapter and prayer, the leader would ask if any one had a word working in his mind that he would like to hear the brethren upon. One would answer, The apostle says, "I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." I would wish to hear some distinguishing marks between the man whose zeal *is* according to knowledge, and whose zeal is *not*, as God may reveal it to your own souls. The leader

would call on them one after another, and some would have such utterance given them, that all could not speak in one day. There would be at least three prayers. This was continued so long as we were as sheep without a shepherd. The godly Niel Morrison heard of the success of his fellow passengers, and soon rejoined them. Also five of the families that went to Carolina made their appearance. Mr. Morrison used to take every alternate day in leading worship.

In the year 1810, I found myself on the Scotch Ridge, when a portion of the foregoing history of the wanderings of the settlers was given to me. From that time I can write from observation, and participation in *all* the struggles, joys, and sorrows of St. James. At the time of my arrival I learned that there were twenty persons who observed the worship of God in their families.

The grant of land was issued in 1812, and parish officers found it inconvenient to have St. Stephen so extensive. It was divided next winter, and the parish of St. James formed from a part of it. About this time the lamented McDonald died, and his intimate friend Colin Campbell, Esq., succeeded him, as Crown Land Surveyor; and laid out Oak-hill for natives of St. Stephen. In 1813–14, the crops failed, and nothing could be got from Calais on account of the war. In a general election which occurred, it was said that Joseph Porter, Esq., did not miss a Scotchman's vote in the county. When he was declared elected, a man called him the Scotch member. Mr. Porter thanked him and said, "I am proud of that title." The year 1815 bordered upon famine: many herbs and roots seldom used as food were sought after and obtained. Mr. Porter managed to get 200 bushels of corn into his grist mill; would not sell a bushel of it to lumbermen. He said that oxen and horses could eat hay, but poor men's children could not.

By this time the road to St. Stephen was straightened and made shorter and more passable. Horses could now carry a load on their backs. Rev. D. MacCaul, whose ministry the immigrants attended at St. Stephen, was therefore able occasionally to visit St. James on week-days and preach. Rev. Dr. MacGregor, of Pictou, visited us, and administered the Lord's Supper. Some years after, Rev. Mr. Sprott visited us; next Rev. Mr. MacCallum came twice, and administered the sacrament each time. Having but two elders, Rev. Mr. Wilson, who came to this province from the North of Ireland, ordained five additional elders and administered the sacrament. In 1825 the Report of the Glasgow Colonial Society reached us, holding out inducements of supply to settlers in the Colonies. We thanked God and took courage. Held a meeting to consider what could be done about building a church. One thought it could be done; another, that it was visionary. One thought that He who sent the fish with a piece of money in his mouth to Peter's hook would send us help; another, that we might build a small church, but not a large one; a third, that we could build a large church easier than a small one; that friends would be more liberal in aiding us, and we could have a bolder face to beg for a respectable building than for a mean one. It might be said of St. James in those days:

> Behold how good a thing it is
> And how becoming well,
> Together, such as brethren are
> In unity to dwell. —*Ps.* 133.

All longed to see the one object accomplished. It was finally agreed to erect a building, 42x36, 17 feet post, with end gallery, and a tower. A

subscription list was opened—the old men signing from £5 to £10 in labour and materials. We had a goodly number of young men who had no wives to make them drag heavily, and they went into it like the 42d going to battle. A man was sent to St. Stephen with a paper, and the third day came home with £75 subscribed. Another man was sent to St. John, St. Andrews, &c. People were astonished at our courage and success, for to many the object seemed visionary. Being late in the season we postponed building till next summer.

In January 1826 our brightest star, Niel Morrison, was called to his everlasting rest. That was a day of mourning and weeping in St. James. Believing that death was near, he said to a brother elder, "You must take my place in the Sabbath services." I watched with him the night before his death; in the morning had family worship with him. At the close of it, he stretched out his hand, drew me near, and said, "My dear———, never continue praying as long as you get words to utter. Many a time I have been splitting on that rock. Long prayers are a weariness to the carnal mind." I mention this for the instruction of young converts. Aged experienced Christians generally make short comprehensive prayers.

Summer came, and every man and ox was up and doing. A frame was raised, underpinned, boarded, and the roof shingled and painted; the tower boarded to the bell dock, and covered to keep the rain out until we could do better. Funds getting exhausted we were brought to a halt. We were reminded of the words of Dr. Watt:

We may expect some danger nigh
When we possess delight.

A Gaelic preacher, who laboured a few years in Pictou, appeared amongst us, saying that he had heard of us and felt anxious to give us a few weeks preaching. We received him with joy. Weeks passed—months—attachment growing stronger in some, suspicion springing up in the mind of others. The general attachment was so great that a call was spoken of. hour elders wished to see credentials before signing a call. He stated that these were in Pictou, but he would go and get them. He left and was gone about six weeks. Here I find a difficult task, viz., to deal with the inconsistency of the dead, and yet I cannot explain the case without doing so, more or less. We received a letter from a friend in St. John that he was in and about that city all the time under the influence of———. He returned, but no credentials; they were lost. How hard to root out prejudice even in good people! A Gaelic minister in St. James it was impossible to part with. Here a division took place—the congregation and two elders, majority; four elders and their families, minority. Our schoolhouse erected on an acre of land purchased in 1811 was large. It was intended for holding meetings. It was left with the majority for six months, on the condition that the minority should have it next six months. The latter knew that the former had godly men and women among them. They had the aged elder of Sutherlandshire with them, who seemed to have the Bible by heart, although he knew no letters, nor English. The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and prayer were deemed the best recourse, in order to overcome the trouble. No application to the Presbytery was made, no violent language, nor public discussion. One party did indeed say that the other neither knew their Bibles, nor the principles of the Church of Scotland; that if the minister preached the truth on the Lord's day, his failings during the week were nobody's business. Loving brethren and sisters going to worship the same God, through the same Saviour, began to avoid each other. A third elder was ordained and added to the other two to strengthen—one more lamb-like could not

be found. The dissenting elders, as they might be called, attended the ordination, said nothing, and after benediction walked off, followed by several men and women expressing sorrow that we should differ. By the expiration of six months the minister moved his quarters to the Basswood Ridge. The school-house was left, and occupied as proposed. The minority increased. This state of things continued nearly three years. At last the word of God came so forcibly to the aged elder that he could not resist. He confessed his error of his own accord. After this the majority got to be a small minority. Mark here what a great injury one gifted man can do to a congregation. At last the minister took his leave. We then wrote to Rev. Dr. MacLean of St. Andrews to give us a day's preaching. He was a good Gaelic scholar, came well prepared for the occasion and found us all in one house. Thus ended our first division, January, 1830.

Resolved to go forward with the building, a man was sent to Fredericton to solicit aid. He set off on horseback about January 20. On his arrival in Fredericton he met the late Colonel Wyre, and James Brown, Esq. They took him into the Assembly sleigh: drove to Government house, and introduced him to Sir Archibald Campbell who gave him £10. He returned by way of St. John. There he found that his never failing friend Colin Campbell, then Editor of the *Courant*, published in St. Andrews, had in a conspicuous column given notice of his tour, the dimensions of the church, the weakness of the congregation, and wished him all success in his praise-worthy undertaking. The feeling of attachment between Messrs. Porter, Campbell, and the emigrants never was disturbed, it exists in their children, and I doubt not will go down to the third or fourth generation. The delegate from St. James brought home £54 in his pocket. Next Summer the walls were finished inside and out, lathed, floors laid, pulpit built. The church was seated with benches, and when prepared was opened by Dr. MacLean. But our young men were not pleased with the look of the church which as yet had no steeple. Although most of them wrought double their first subscriptions, they subscribed again the sum of £25 without consulting the old men, and beautified the church with a handsome spire. This made it a pleasant object to look from a distance, and it enlivened the neighbourhood in which it was placed. Meanwhile we sent a bond to Scotland, well signed, with a view to get a minister, and anxiously awaited the result.

Appendix G.

(*From the Colonial Patriot, March 6th*, 1830.)

Dr. MacGregor. It is this week our painful duty to record the death of the Rev. James MacGregor, D. D. Two years ago he was seized with paralysis; and on Monday last experienced a return, which terminated in death on Wednesday. He had completed 70 years. His funeral took place this day, at one o'clock; and was attended by an immense assemblage from all parts of the district. For 44 years this excellent Divine has laboured in Pictou; and there never lived a man more universally esteemed

and beloved. He came to this country under the authority of the Associate Synod, in Scotland. We refrain from farther remarks, assured that an extended account of his life will be ere long prepared by abler hands.

The following extract from a speech delivered by Jotham Blanchard, Esq., at Glasgow, at a general meeting of the Society for advancing liberal education in the Colonies, may not, in the meantime, be considered out of place.

"Near half a century ago this father, (Dr. MacGregor,) actuated by an ardent piety, and a more than ordinary vigor of mind, put his life in his hand, and crossed the Atlantic to preach the gospel to those who literally *dwelt solitary in the woods.* He had a field boundless in extent as in difficulties. The Eastern part of Nova Scotia, and the adjacent Islands of Cape Breton and Prince Edward, were all before him. The inhabitants were few and far apart—roads in that region were an invention of a late day—the site of the town of Pictou contained one or two houses—and it was not an easy matter to travel to the next,—marked trees, a pocket compass, or an Indian were the only guides through the wilderness in those early times; and the frail barks which were used on the harbours, and rivers, and seas, afforded a still less desirable mode of travelling. But the people were in need of the gospel; and that to Dr. MacGregor, was sufficient to call forth all that duty required—they were anxious for it, and that called forth more. It would be difficult to justify his constant exposure of person by night and by day; and his almost superhuman exertions from week to week, and year to year. A plank was oft his bed, and a potato his fare. Sleep was not seldom denied him for several nights together. The people were located in little settlements, and when he visited one of these there were they all; and his prayers and preaching and exhortations were often continued with little interruption for a week at a time. Nor were his labours in vain. There are yet many in life of the best of our people, who received all their religious knowledge and religious impressions under his ministry. Many more have gone to their reward, and he will speedily enter upon his, for he is worn out in the service of his Master."

(*From the Halifax Recorder, March 6th,* 1830.)

DIED:

At the East River of Pictou on Wednesday last, at an advanced age, the Rev. James MacGregor, D. D., Minister of the Gospel. In recording the death of this worthy and honoured father of the Church of Nova Scotia, we cannot refrain from expressing our grief at the removal of so kind a relation from the bosom of his family—so pious and benevolent a member from the body of society. He was among the first Presbyterian Clergymen, who, animated by the hope of benefitting mankind, left the comforts of a British home, to seek toil and privation in the forest of Nova Scotia. About the year 1786 he landed in the district of Pictou, where his exertions for religion cannot soon be forgotten. "Aroused to activity by the vigor of youth, and burning with desire to promote the best interests of men, he traversed the pathless solitudes in every direction—not to collect the hire of the labourer from the people of the wood, but to share their hardships, and soothe their sorrows with the tidings of salvation. When ever a prospect of usefulness opened, he disregarded fatigue and out-

braved danger, that the lost sheep of the desert might be restored to the fold."

He laboured in the true cause of pure Christianity, viewing the human family with the charitable eye of a brother, he raised no petty objections about form. He was neither the narrow zealot of a particular sect, nor the paltry bigot who wished to create distinctions where no difference existed. If he met a believer, he joined him as a traveller journeying on the same road to the same country, and was happy that they had been brought together. If he found an unfortunate brother, who needed consolation, he remained not to inquire, whether that brother were of Paul or of Apollos, but administered to him the comforts of the gospel. He was a Trustee of the Pictou Academy, who filled the situation with equal honour to himself, and advantage to the institution; and he was an active co-operator in whatever tended to promote the interests of education. To Pictou he has ever been a father and a friend. When in its infancy he guarded the morals of its inhabitants—communicated to them a knowledge of the Saviour, and watched over their best interests. Now that he has been gathered to his fathers, the virtuous and the good of all denominations who knew him will deplore the loss that the Christian religion must sustain in his removal; yet it is a subject of joy to know that his spirit has been wafted to the bosom of the Master, whom he so faithfully served while on earth. Even the individuals who embittered his latter days by their efforts to frustrate his labours, and who endeavoured to sow the seeds of discord where peace had formerly reigned, will now leave him to his rest: and they will probably lament that they inflicted a wound into the heart of one so benevolent as the Rev. Dr. MacGregor, who never wounded any. The friends of Christianity may rejoice to learn that a memoir of this Reverend Gentleman will be presented to the public, from the pen of one who will not fail to make it interesting to every religious mind.

MEMOIR OF THE REV. JAMES MACGREGOR, D. D., FROM A WORK ENTITLED "BIBLIOTHECA SCOTA-CELTICA." BY JOHN REID, GLASGOW, 1832.

James MacGregor was a native of Perthshire: he was born and brought up in the vicinity of Comrie, on the romantic banks of the Loch Earn. He not only spoke the Gaelic with fluency, but wrote it with elegance and precision, which in those days was a rare attainment.

After passing through the necessary Seminaries and Halls of learning, at the early age of about 21,* he was licensed to preach by the General Associate Synod. Nearly half a century ago, although his prospects of a charge in this country were very encouraging; upon a requisition being received from Nova Scotia for a minister, actuated by an ardent piety, and more than ordinary vigor of mind, he crossed the Atlantic to preach the gospel to those who "dwelt solitary in the woods."

He here entered on a field boundless in extent as in difficulties. The Eastern part of Nova Scotia, and the Islands of Cape Breton and Prince Edward, were all before him. The inhabitants were few and far between. Roads in that region were an invention of a later day. The site of the town of Pictou contained only one or two houses, and it was not an easy matter to travel to the next hamlet,—marked trees, a pocket compass, or an Indian were his only guides through the wilderness in those early

* We think this a mistake.—G. P.

times; but the people were in need of the gospel, and that, to Dr. MacGregor, was sufficient to call forth all his exertions.

It would be difficult to justify his constant exposure of person, by night and by day, and his almost superhuman exertions from week to week, and year to year. A plank was often his bed, and a potato his fare. Sleep was frequently a stranger to him for several nights together. Towards the close of his life and ministry, we regret to say that the comfort of this man of God was embittered, and his congregation rent by the intrusion of a stranger into his labours; and still more to add that party spirit supplanted the feelings of gratitude, and not a few who owed much to him, when none other would come over to help them, deserted his ministry for that of another, certainly not more able, or affectionate, or Evangelical.

Nothing, however could divert his benevolence from its predominant bent. Attached to the land of his fathers, and anxious to promote the best interests of his countrymen at home—to edify those by his pen, whom he could no longer reach by his voice, he conceived the design of clothing the doctrines of the gospel in Gaelic versification, that he might unite the best instruction with the sweetest melodies of his native land. The execution of this purpose produced the little volume of hymns which bear his name.

MacGregor may be regarded as the apostle of Nova Scotia, or at least of the District of Pictou. Doubtless, others have laboured in other parts of the Colony with laudable industry, as well as with desirable success, and deserved their meed of praise. Nay, one or two had preceded him on the scene of the ministry; but he was best known in this western part of Scotland, therefore most frequently mentioned there, and very highly as well as justly esteemed.

In proof of this last statement, one fact which is honourable to all parties concerned, deserves to be recorded. No sooner were his character and claims testified to the members of the University of Glasgow, than the Senate unanimously agreed to confer upon him the title of D. D., an honour which he amply merited by his attainments and his services, but which, coming from his native land, and from a literary quarter so highly respectable, would be received by him with peculiar interest, and would contribute, there can be no doubt, unsolicited and unexpected as it was on his part, to shed a gleam of light upon the evening of his life, and to cheer him amid the causes of depression which arose from the failure of nature, and the fickleness of some of his former friends.

Besides, being a man of ardent piety, of determined resolution, of expansive benevolence, and of elevated spirit, he was a Divine of no small reach of thought, and a poet of considerable genius.

His letters which he wrote on behalf of the Church in that distant land, exhibit a charming and touching simplicity.

Some of his essays, published in a religious periodical in his native country, show that he was possessed of an independent turn of thinking; and the small volume of hymns, already noticed, is believed to be the last of his printed works, and demonstrates, as well as the whole tenor of his life, that he loved to consecrate the crowning and the most powerful efforts of his mind, to the glory of God, and the good of his countrymen.

In the Spring of 1828, he was seized with epilepsy,* and at Pictou, on the first day of March, 1830, at the age of 70, he experienced a return, which terminated in his death on the 3d. His funeral was attended by an immense assemblage from all parts of the district.

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* Should be paralysis.—G. P.

For 46 years this excellent Divine had laboured in Pictou, and there never lived a man more universally esteemed and beloved.

EXTRACT FROM A SERMON PREACHED BY THE REV. ROBERT S. PATTERSON.

I have made these remarks with a view to turn your attention to the lamented death of the late Dr. MacGregor, of the East River, of Pictou. We are not in the habit of preaching funeral sermons. While we consider it our duty carefully to improve providential dispensations, we conceive that this is better done without referring to the character of the deceased. We do not hesitate to say, however, that from this rule there are some exceptions. There are persons who are possessed of such superior excellence, or who have been so distinguished for their zeal and activity, and labours in the cause of Christ, that it would be unwise and unjust to withhold that tribute to their memory which our feeble abilities can afford.

Among these, the venerable minister whose death we have announced to you, holds no inferior place. Nor ought this tribute of respect to be confined to that part of the church in which he more immediately resided. Though connected with a particular congregation, his usefulness was not restrained within such narrow limits. Like an eminent servant of Christ of old, his praise was in all the churches. His name was extensively known, and the respect which it secured was not more limited. Surely then, it cannot be improper in me to make him the subject of a few remarks. And here I would wish not to be misunderstood. He who is now gone, is removed beyond the reach of the kind offices of humanity. He has, no doubt, mingled with the multitudes who surround the throne. All the respect which we can afford him, will not in the least degree affect his state. But he has left us an example, which each, according to the sphere in which he moves, would do well to follow. While we cherish the memory of his virtues in our hearts, let us imitate them in our life.

Between forty and fifty years ago, this excellent man, influenced by a strong desire to promote the salvation of perishing mortals, left the country of his nativity. All the endearments of home, which to him were neither few nor small, must yield to his ardent benevolence. Born in a country, which, for ages past, had been the seat of science and civilization, enjoying the advantages of a liberal education, he was formed for realizing the pleasures of literary society. Possessing no common degree of sensibility also, he must have keenly felt the pains of separation from relatives and friends. But all these considerations, his desire to promote the honour of his master and the salvation of his fellow men, far out-weighed. Suffice it to remark, that leaving the land of his fathers, he arrived at the shores of Nova Scotia. The district of Pictou was to be the scene of his labours. He who now visits that country can form but a very imperfect idea of what it was at that period. Nothing was to be seen but a continued succession of wood, with here and there a solitary inhabitant, with a little cultivation. The pathless forest, also, presented but a poor means of intercourse between the scattered settlers. In this situation none of you will anticipate that their comforts would be abundant. But I need not pretend to give you information upon this point. There are some in this worshipping assembly who might well be my instructors, and to them I appeal for the truth of these statements.

Such was the state of the country when this faithful minister entered upon his labours. A mind less ardent, appalled by the difficulties of the

situation, would have shrunk back from the attempt. But his zeal was of no common order. Ardent in youth, vigorous in constitution, and burning with desire to promote the salvation of his fellow-mortals, he commenced his ministrations. Exposed to privations and toil, he laboured long and faithfully in that part of the church. He has been a father to the district of Pictou; he has watched over the best interests of that growing community, and death, only, terminated his exertions on its behalf. His labours have not been in vain. The Master whom he so faithfully served has honoured his ministrations with rich fruit. He lived to see many spiritual children to be a source of comfort to him in his declining years; and he will have many for a crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Wide and difficult as was his charge in the district of Pictou, his labours were not confined to it. He could not behold the vast moral wilderness before him without the deepest sympathy. In Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Cape Breton, and Prince Edward Island, there was a vast field uncultivated. Thousands were perishing for lack of the bread of life. The prospect was too painful for the benevolent mind of this faithful minister, to contemplate without sympathy. Nor did his sympathy evaporate in mere unavailing desires. He resolved to traverse the pathless forest, and carry the tidings of salvation to those who dwelt solitary in the woods. We are accustomed even now, to complain of inconveniences of travelling; but judging from the present, we can form little idea of the difficulties that existed forty years ago. At that period roads were almost entirely unknown. The sea shore often presented the only path, intercepted by numerous rivers, which were crossed frequently with great difficulty, and sometimes with no small danger. The accommodations of the traveller were anything but comfortable. This indeed, in most instances, was not the fault of his benevolent entertainer. Had he possessed the means, no doubt the accommodations of his visitor would have been more ample; but what could be expected from him? Placed in the middle of the wood, his little cultivation affording him only a scanty means of subsistence; far removed from any quarter where the comforts of life could be procured, he was but ill-prepared for the entertainment of strangers. A plank was often the bed, and a potato the fare of the weary traveller. Such was the situation of the country, when this faithful servant of Christ traversed a great part of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Cape Breton, and Prince Edward Island, sharing the hardships of the scattered inhabitants, and soothing their sorrows with the tidings of salvation. And no doubt his name is mentioned in many a humble dwelling; no doubt many can trace their best consolations to his prayers and his instructions; and no doubt many will drop the tear of sympathy over this venerable minister.

It is not our intention, at present, to enter into a detail of his varied labours, in the service of his Master. Any attempts of this kind our limits would not permit; and, indeed it is altogether unnecessary. I am persuaded that many of you are well acquainted with his great exertions. It cannot be improper, however, shortly to advert to some of the most prominent features in his character, which we ought to make the object of our imitation.

His faith was of no ordinary description. To that revelation which God has given us of his will, he gave his most unqualified assent. His was no speculative faith; it powerfully influenced his life. Not only in the season of prosperity, when the world smiled around, but in the dark hour of adversity he firmly trusted in God. The consequence of this was, that in the most threatening dangers, his mind was at ease. Firmly re-

lying upon that God who holds the reins of the universe in his hands, he was serene amidst the convulsions by which others are terrified; and we have known few who possessed such a firm and unbroken assurance of a happy immortality. Let us imitate his faith; let us believe the divine testimony; let us acquiesce in the dispensation of heaven.

His charity was expanded. He was not of a censorious temper. He was ever disposed to put the most favourable construction upon the actions of others. He could not be induced to attach blame without the most decisive proof; and he was most ready to excuse and forgive. His charity was not confined to the narrow limits of a sect, but reached to all who bore the Christian name. All who bore the image of the Saviour, as far as known to him, shared in his esteem and his friendship. Though firmly attached to the Presbyterian doctrine and modes of worship, he lived in habits of intimacy with clergymen and private Christians of various denominations. His was not indeed that boasted, though false liberality, too prevalent at the present day, which can so easily overlook sin. He was too faithful to his Master, and too charitable to his brethren, to overlook sin, even in those whom he most esteemed; and he was remarkable for a happy talent for administering reproof, without giving offence.

Brethren, let us imitate his example; let us cultivate that expanded charity by which he was so honourably characterized; let us be disposed to extenuate and forgive the faults of our brethren; and let us love all who bear the image of Christ, to whatever sect or party they belong.

His zeal was most ardent. Perhaps this was one of those excellences in his character, which shine with prominent lustre. The cause of Zion ever lay near his heart, and he earnestly sought its advancement. His zeal did not waste itself in unavailing desires, but incited him to holy activity. Nor was it repressed by trifling, nor even by great difficulties. Those obstacles which would have paralyzed the exertions of others, only excited him to increased activity. His zeal was not blind attachment to a sect or party; it was an enlightened zeal; it was a holy desire to advance the cause of God. Does not this trait in his character furnish us with a forcible reproof? Is it not too evident that zeal among us is in a languishing condition? Let a reflection on the bright example set before us kindle in our hearts the holy flame.

I need scarcely inform you that his labours were abundant. Which of his brethren could compare with him in these? Who of them has manifested such unwearied exertion, in carrying the glad tidings of salvation to the abodes of the destitute? Upon his missionary excursions also, he was most industrious. Day after day, and week after week, with little intermission, his prayers, and his preaching, and his exertions were continued. To him it was no drudgery to be employed in the service of his Master. It was the object of his fondest delight, and his most ardent desire; and when the body was worn down with fatigue the spirit remained unabated. You who have heard him upon these occasions can say that he was truly eloquent. It was not indeed the eloquence which consisted in the tinsel of rhetoric; it was not the eloquence which consisted in high sounding words, or gracefully turned periods; but it was the eloquence of a heart deeply affected with the awful realities of eternity, and earnestly desirous of impressing the same feeling upon the minds of others; it was an eloquence which for a plainness and simplicity which rendered it adapted to the lowest capacity, strikingly resembled that of his great Master. As an evidence of his unabated exertion in the cause of the Redeemer, I need only farther mention, that even after the first attack of that disease which at last terminated his mortal existence, though much weakened, he

considered it his duty, instead of diminishing, to increase his public labours on the Sabbath; and on the first day of that very week on which his death occurred, he proclaimed the name of that Saviour into whose blissful presence he was soon to enter. But he rests from his labours; his toils are ended; his privations are terminated; and he enjoys uninterrupted and eternal repose, in the bosom of his Saviour and his God. Brethren, let us imitate his example. We are not all called to be public teachers in the church; but we are called to be diligent in the respective spheres which Providence has allotted us. Let us not be slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Let us be steadfast, immovable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord.

But his usefulness was not confined to his public labours. Sensible that he could but ill serve his Master by limiting his ministrations to the pulpit, he was the advocate of religion wherever he went. Every suitable opportunity was embraced for recommending the interests of piety; and to him few, very few indeed, were unsuitable. He possessed a happy faculty of turning the conversation, whatever it might be, into the channel of religion, without giving offence. As the love of Christ was his ruling principle, so he often dwelt upon the wonders of redemption. As the great things of God's law occupied the meditations of his heart, so they were often upon his lips. Remembering this trait in his character, have we not much cause to blush deeply? How seldom is religion the subject of our conversation! How often does a criminal shame prevent us from avowing the cause of that Master whom we profess to serve! Let us learn wisdom from the bright example before us; let our conversation be always with grace, seasoned with salt; let us be always ready to give an answer to every one that asketh us a reason of the hope that is within us, with meekness and fear.

The benevolence of this servant of Christ also claims our attention. It was tender and affectionate. None told him the tale of woe, and told it in vain. Possessing deep sensibility himself, he knew how to feel for others. His benevolence did not terminate in mere unavailing sympathy. None was more ready to extend the hand of relief; nor was his benevolence limited to bodily distress,—he was too sensible of the value of the immortal soul to overlook its interests. In the house of mourning, and at the sick bed, he was no stranger, and few were better qualified to administer the healing balm of gospel consolation. He felt much for the situation of the benighted Heathen; he greatly rejoiced in those benevolent exertions by which the present times are so honourably characterized, for relieving them from their destitute situation. He dwelt fondly upon the prospect of millennial glory, and every means for effecting it had his patronage and support. He was ever ready, upon all occasions, to contribute of his labour and of his property to the interests of benevolence: and so liberal was his expenditure for this purpose, as often materially to diminish the comforts of himself and family. Let us imitate his benevolence; let us pity, and, according to our ability, relieve the distressed; let us soothe the sorrows of the afflicted; let us not withhold our support from the institutions of benevolence.

His interest in the cause of education ought not to be overlooked. He was a Trustee of the Pictou Academy, who filled the situation with equal honour to himself and advantage to the Institution. Educated in that Seminary, I would count it alike ungenerous and unjust, not to mention the interest which this excellent man took in its prosperity. Little did he expect ever to see such an institution there when he arrived at the district of Pictou. Covered with wood, inhabited by a few settlers, possessing

none of the wealth, and few of the comforts of life, hardly, if at all, enjoying the advantage of the commonest education; he little anticipated that such an institution would so soon be established in it. He had seen vast tracts of land rescued from the forest; he had seen extensive settlements formed, where formerly there were few, if any, inhabitants; he had seen a town erected where there only one or two solitary dwellings; he had seen places of worship reared where formerly no temple of God was to be found; he had seen numerous faithful pastors around him, where he was long only a solitary labourer; he had seen a seminary for liberal education established where there was hardly a common school; he had seen Zion in her desolation, and in her prosperity; he had seen a vast moral wilderness, and he had seen the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; and who could behold such a prospect without emotion? It was too much for a mind of far less sensibility than that of Dr. MacGregor.

Here my mind naturally recurs to those occasions, when with others assembled in that Institution, I shared in his advices and in his prayers. Many of these seasons I well remember. I shall not soon forget my own feelings, when I heard that excellent man expressing his thankfulness for those prospects which so far exceeded his most sanguine expectations, while the rolling tears disclosed the emotions of his heart.

Thus we have given you, though very imperfectly, a short sketch of the most prominent features in the character of this faithful servant of Christ. That he was without his faults we do not presume to affirm. To be free from imperfections, while here below, is more than falls to the lot of humanity. Even the most eminent saints and servants of God have not attained to perfection. Even the great Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are. But we may safely affirm, that he whose life we have now briefly sketched was a burning and shining light. For unaffected piety—for ardent zeal—for laborious exertion—for disinterested benevolence, he has not left his equal in these parts. Well, indeed, may the church lament her loss. Truly, a great man is fallen in Israel. But shall we mourn for him? No! He is gone to that God whom he so faithfully served; he is gone to that Saviour whose cause he so zealously and successfully promoted; he is gone to join the assembled throng of holy angels; he is gone to mingle in the blissful company of glorified saints, and no doubt he has met with many happy spirits, the the fruits of his ministerial toil. Let us then be followers of them, who, through faith and patience, are now inheriting the promise.

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